

COLLECTION OF PURITAN AND
ENGLISH THEOLOGICAL LITERATURE

THE THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

PRINCETON, NEW JERSEY

PHINO ME THEOLO WALL

Division SCB
Section 11/08

No, ---

V - Jan





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CONFIRMATION



RESTAURATION, The necessary means of REFORMATION.

And

RECONCILIATION;
For the Healing of the Corruptions and
Divisions of the Churches:

Submissively, but earnefily tendered to the Consideration of the Soveraigne Powers, Magifirates, Ministers, and People, that they may awake, and be up and doing in the Execution of so much, as appeareth to be necessary as they are true to Christ, his Church and Gospel, and to their own and others Souls, and to the Peace and wellsare of the Nations; and as they will answer the neglect to Christ, at their Peril.

By Richard Baxter, an unworthy Minister of Christ, that longeth to see the Healing of the Churches.

Isa. 44.3,4,5. For I will pour water on him that is thirfty, and floods upon the dry ground: I will pour my Spirit on thy seed, and my Blessing upon thine Offspring, and they shall spring as among the grass, as willows by the water-courses. One shall say, I am the Lords, and another shall call himself by the name of Jacob; and another shall Subscribe with his hand unto the Lord, and surname himself by the name of Israel.

London, Printed by A. M. for Nevil Simmons Bookfeller in Kederminster, and are to be fold by Joseph Granford, at the Kings-Head in Pauls Church-yard, 1658.

CONFIRMATION,

REFORMATION,

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READER.

Christian Reader ;

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Aving in divers writings, moved for the Restitution of a solemn

Transition, of all that pass from an Infant-state of Church-membership, into the number of the Adult, and are admitted

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to their Priviledges, and the Associated Ministers of this County, having made it an Article of their Agreement, at last came forth an excellent Exercitation on Confirmation, written by Mr. Jonathan Hanmer sovery learnedly and piously, endeavouring the Restoration of this Practice. Being very glad of lo good a work, upon an invitation, I prefixed an Epistle before it; which hath occasioned this following 03

To the Keader. lowing Disputation. For when the Book was read, the designe was Generally approved, (as farre as I can learne) and very acceptable to good men of all parties. But many of them called to me, to try whether some more Scripture proofes might not be brought for it, that the Preceptive, as well as the Mediate Necessity might appeare. At the defire of some Reverend God ly Brethren, I hastily A 4 drew

drew up this which is here offered you; 1. Partly to satisfie them in the point of Scripture Evidence; 2. But principally to latisfie my own earnest desires, after the Reformation, and Healing of the Churches, to which I do very confidently apprehend, this excellent work to have a singular tendencie. Here is a Medicine so effectual to Heale our Breaches, and set our disordered Societies

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Lothe Reader.

cieties in joynt, (being owned in whole by the Episcopall, Presbyterian, Congregational, and Erastian, and in half, by the Anabaptifts) that nothing but our own felfconceitedness perverinels, lazyneis, or wilfull enmity to the Peace of the Churches, is able to deprive us of a blefled fuccess. But alas, our minds are the Subjects of the disease; and are so alienated, exulcerated, and to lelfilhly

ishly partial and uncharitable, that when the Plafter is offered as, and Peace brought to our doors, I must needs expect that many should pievishly cast it away, and others betray it, by a lazy commendation, and so disable the few that would be faithfull, practical, and industrious, from that General success, which is so necessary and defirableate, and anoto alienald,

As for them that lay all

our Peace on Episcopacy, and Liturgie, I intend if God will, to fend them after this, some Healing motions on those subjects also. And if they have no better success, than presently to fatisfy my own Conscience, in the faithfull performance of fo great a duty, and to awaken the Desires, Endeavours and Praiers of the more moderate and Impartial, I shall not think my labour loft, Pray for the Peace

of

of Ferusalem; they shall prosper that love it. Let's seeke it of God, as well as men; which is the daily, though too desective practise, of

The most unworthy Servant Land of the King of Peace,

Periodical formance of the property of the property of the more and considers of the more may labour the Peace of the Peac

If Magistrates or others, who are obliged to promote the worke, which is bere commended to them, do want leisure, or patience to read the whole, I desire them to peruse these following Contents, and those parts of the Work, in which they are most unsatisfied

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Table Today

there who are ablum to: oriumite the everly, volucibility Very represented to the me all went leifure, or politice to sends be whole, I define them; separafeeles (ollowing Concentres and chest moves of the Work, in which the row ing, and have has



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PROP. V. As a Personal faith is the Condition, before God, of Title to the Priviledges of the Adult; so the Profession of this Faith, is the Condition

tion of his Title before the Church; and without this Profession, he is not to be taken as an Adult-member, nor admitted to the Priviledges of such. Proved, and Vindicated from their Objections, that plead against the necessity of an express Profession: with some Application urging to the practice.

PROP. VI. It is not every kind of Profession that is the Condition, or neceslary qualification of those, that are to be admitted to the Priviledges of Adultmembers, but fuch a Profession, as God hath made necessary by his express Word, and by the nature of the Object, and the uses and ends, to which he dothrequire it. It must be a Profession of True Christianity in all the Essentials. What are the Essentials, as to Objects and Acts: It must be a Credible Profession. 1. It must seeme to be Understanding. 2. And serious. 3. And voluntary, upon deliberation. 4. Not

4. Not nullified by a contradiction in word or deed. 5. It must be Practice first, that must make words Credible, when the person by persidiousness bath sorfeited his credit.

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Prov. VIII. Though it belong to the Paflour's Office to Fudge of the Profession of such expectants, yet are they bound up by the Laws of Christ what Profession to accept, and what to refuse: and if by breaking these Laws, they

they shall dangerously or grossy wrong the Church; it belongeth to the Magisstrate to correct them, and to the people to admonish them, and disown their singues and in desperate cases to disown them. The Positive Title-condition to be produced, is The Profession of true Christianity. The Minister that resustant this Profession, must prove it not credible. Of tolerable ignorance:

Prop. IX. It is evident that Magistrates, Ministers and people, have each a power of fudging: but different, as they have different works. How far Ministers are fudges. Proved by ten Reasons, against the popular claim, &cc. How far the people must fudge: How far the Magistrate must fudge Ministers for these Matters, and Ministers obey them?

PROP. X. To this Ministerial Approbation of the Profession and Qualifications of the Expectant, there is to be ada 2 joyned

joyned a Ministerial Investitute or Delivery of the Benefit expected. How many Sacraments there are. I. More than seaven in the largest sense. 2. Five in a large sense (not intollerable.) 3. Two only in the strictest sense,

as we define them.

PROP. XI. The Solemn Ministerial Investiture of Professions into the right of the Church-Priviledges of the Adult, is either 1. of the Unbaptized, who are now first entred. 2. Or of the Baptized in Infancy, that never proved ungodly, nor violated that first Covenant. 3. Or of thole Baptized (whether in Infancy or at Age) that have since proved wicked and broke the Covenant. The first of these Investitures is to be by Baptilin; the second by Confirmation, and the third by Absolution. So that the solemn Investiture that now I am pleading for, is by Confirmation to one fort, (that never proved ungodly since their Baptism) and by Absolution to the other sort (that

broke their Covenant) which yet hath a certain Confirmation in, or with it.

PROP. XII. This solemn Investiture on personal Profession, being thus proved the Ordinance of God, for the solemn renewing the Covenant of Grace, between God and the Adult-Covenanter, it must needs follow that it is a Corroborating Ordinance, and that Corroborating Grace is to be expeted in it from God, by all that come to it in sincerity of heart: And so it hath the name of Confirmation upon that account also.

PROP. XIII. Ministerial Imposition of hands, in Confirmation and the foredescribed sort of Absolution, is a Lawfull and Convenient action, or Ceremony, and ordinarily to be used, as it hath been of old by the Universal Church. But yet it is not of such Necessity, but that we a 3 must

must dispence in this Ceremony with scrupulous Consciences, that cannot be (atilfied to submit to it: Imposition of hands is allowed in Scripture to be used Generally by Spiritual Superiours, to signific their Desire, that the Blessing, Guift or Power, may be conferred on the Inferiour, for which they have a call to mediate. Proved. Particlarly, 1. We find in Scripture a Blessing of Church-members, with laying on of hands. 2. And that the Holy Ghost is in a special manner promised to Believers, over and above that measure of the Spirit, which caused them to Believe. 3. And that Praier, with laying on of hands, was the outward means to be used by Christs Ministers, for procuring this, or investing them of it. 4. And that this was not a temporary, but fixed Ordinance. All proved. How the Holy Ghost is given before Faith, and after Faith, and how sealed in Baptism, and how not? What Hope of the success of Imposition, with Praier for the spirit. Scripture and Antiquity for it. Reasons for the non-necessity of it to the the scrupulous.

PROP. XIV. Though in receiving Adultpersons out of Infidelity by Baptism into the Church; a sudden Profession,
without any stay to see their Reformation, may serve turne, yet in receiving
these that were Baptized heretofore, into the number of Adult-members, or
to the Priviledges of such, their lives
must be enquired after, which must be
such as do not confute their Profession.

PROF. XV. It is not of flat Necessity, that the Profession of the Expectant be made in the open Congregation, or before many, in order to his Confirmation or admittance.

PROP. XVI. When a person is admitted an Adult-member of a particular Church, as well as of the Universal, bis Profession and Admission must be either before the Church, or satisfatorily

Etorily made known to the Church, at least, who must approve of it by a fudgment of discretion, in order to their Communion with him: and this among us is the ordinary case; because it is the duty of all, that have opportunity to joyne themselves to some particular Church, and it is in such Churches, that Communion in publique Worship and order must be had, either statedly, or transiently and temporarily. Reasons to prove this Interest of the People. Cases of difference between Pastours and people resolved.

PROP. XVII. It is convenient (though not of necessity) that every Church do keep a Register of all that are thus Invested, or admitted into the number of Adult-members.

PROP. XVIII. Those that were never thus
Ministerially and Explicitly Approwed, Confirmed, or Absolved (after
an ungodly life) but have been permitted without it, to joyne usually with
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the Church in prayer and praises, and the Lords Supper, are Approved and Confirmed, eminently, though net formally, though in so doing, both the Pastours and themselves might sinne against God, by the violation of his holy order. Such therefore may be a true Church, and are not to be called back to solemn Confirmation, though in many cases they may be called to Tryall by their Overseers.

PROP. XIX. So exceeding great and many are the Mischiefs that have befallen us by the neglect of a solemn meet Transition from an Infant into the Adult Church-state, and which undoubtedly will continue till this be remedied, that all the Magistrates, Ministers & people, that dissemble not in professing themselves to be Christians, should with speed and diligence attempt the cure. The state of our Parishes anatomized. Twenty intollerable mischiefs, that follow the taking all into our Church-communion,

and neglecting this Confirmation: such as all Christians should lay to heart.

Prop. XX. So many and great are the Benefits that would follow the generall practice of this duty of trying, approving and confirming (or Absolving) all those that enter into the number of Adult-Christians, that it should mightily provoke all Christian Magistrates, Ministers, and people to joyne in a speedy and vigorous execution of it. Twelve excellent Benefits that will come by Confirmation. It's like to be an admirable increaser of knowledg, and holimess, and Church-Reformation. It's a Jingular means of Agreeing the Episcopal, Presbyterians, Congregational, Erastians, and moderating the Anabaptists: proved and urged.

Twenty Objections against this Approved Profession and Confirmation, answered. How little reason have Princes, and Parliaments to restraine most Ministers here from overdoing.

The

The Duties that lie upon us all, for the Execution of this Work: and I. on Ministers. 1. We should Agree upon an unanimous performance. 2. In those Agreements, we must leave men to their Liberty in all unnecessary modes, and circumstances. 3. In taking mens profession, we must avoid both extreams, viz. Loose formality, and overmuch 4. What cour e must be taken with all our Parishe, where some have without a Personal Approved Profession already been admitted to the Lords Supper and some not particularly opened? 5. We must require of all the notoriously ungodly, a Penitent Confession in order to Absolution, as well as a Profession of Faith, and future obedience. 6. Delegales to be chosen by particular Churches, to meet with the Pastours for these and other Church-affaires. 7. The Pastours and Churches should be all Affociated, and the Churches that we hold Communion with, differenced from the rest: that those that are Confirmed firmed and Received by them, may be capable of Communion with all. 8. We must be diligent in publike and private Teaching the Catechumens, and walk inoffensively, condescendingly and vigilantly among them.

2. The Duty of the People, especially the

Godly, in order to this Work.

3. The Magistrates Du'y hereto. 1. To cause those People that are unfit for Church-Communion, to live quietly in the state of Expectants, and to submit to publique and personal Instruction, and Catechizing, to prepare them. 2. To compel Ministers thus to Teach and Catechize them, and see that great Parishes have so many Teachers as may be able to do it. Reasons for compelling us. 3. To lay some penalty on all Pastors, that will not guide the Church by Discipline, as well as preach: Not forbidding them to be Preachers, but to be Pastours and administer Sacraments, that will not do it, as Christ hath appointed. To these ends

ends it may do well, for the Magistrate to have his Agent or Church-Justice to joyne in the Church-meetings, and to inform the Commissioners for Ejection, who may be impowred hereanto. 4. To promote and command the Associations and correspondencies of Pastours and Churches. With what limitations, and to what ends. 5. It would much further this Work, if Visitours were appointed in all parts to see it done, or put on Ministers: Not that any Ministers should have a Power of silencing, suspending, &c. But to let a Civil Visitor, and a Visitor of the Ministry be still joyned together, and let the Minister have only a power to perswade, and the other as a Magistrate to compell, or to bring the cau-(es, which are exempt from his power, to the Superiour Commissioners. 6. It's the unquestionable Duty of Magistrates (not to drive men to Church-Communion that are unmeet, but) to restraine Seducers, from taking advantage of their

their discontents and drawing them away, while they remaine Expectants: Ten Reasons, that deserve the serious consideration of the Magistrate, that shew the great Necessity of this his Moderate assistance, for keeping of deceivers, especially Papists, and containing the prophane and ignorant people in quietness and submission to instruction in an expectant state till they are fit for Church-Communion. 7. To satisfie the Magistrate that is afraid of persecution, certain Regulations of Toleration are propounded. I. Let all that pretend scruple of submitting to the personal or publique Instru-Etion of the Teacher of the Parilh where he lives, be compelled to submit to some one else, who may give it under his hand that he takes that care of him. 2. Let Commissioners be appointed (according to the Laws given them) to guard the door of Toleration, as now they are to guard the door of publique Allowance and Maintenance: and let

none be Tolerated to preach or openly perswade (though for nothing) that have not an Instrument of Licence lealed by these Commissioners: Or else Blasphemers and Heathens may preach for all your Laws against them. 3. Let those that have a sealed Toleration be as responsible to the Commissioners, for their violating the Laws of their Toleration, as we are for breaking the Lawsthat bindus: and let their Toleration be forfeitable, as well as our Maintenance. Reasons for this. To conclude, if as before the daies of William the Conquerour, Magistrates and Ministers might sit together, the Minifers having no power but to per wade; and the Magistrate the sole power of Compulsion, and so I. Approvers keep the door of Toleration. 2. A Church Fustice, or Agent of the Magistrates keep the peace of every Church, or Parish. 3. And the Civil and Ministerial Visiters aforesaid shall be appointed to take Cognisance of the state of Parishes.

Parishes. 4. And the Commissioners for Ejection of scandalous Ministers, be equally enabled to eject the scandalous and blasshemous from their Toleration; the Magistrate might assist us without danger of persecution.

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The necessary means of

REFORMATION

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RECONCILIATION.

Quest. Whether those that were Baptized in Infancy, should be admitted to the Priviledges proper to Adult Churchmembers, without Confirmation, or Restauration, by an Approved Profession of Personal Faith and Repentance? Neg.



Hough the distempers of the Churches of Christ in England; are not so great as the Popish adversaries, or some discontented Brethren do pretend, nor insiderate lamenters of our condi-

cion do imagine, who observe less our enjoyments then our wants, and that have not the faculty of discerning our true Agreements. where there is any difference, but think that many things are wanting that are not, because they eannot find them: Yet is our discomposure such as the wifest have cause to mourn for, and all of us should contribute our endeavours to redrefs. And for the accomplishment of this blessed Work, two things must be done: The first is, to Discover the Principles that must Reform and heal us, if ever we be healed; and to acquaint the world with the necessary means. The fecond is, to concur for the execution, in the application and use of the Remedie, when it is discovered. The first is a work, that is usually done best by a few at first: Though the more Receive and Approve of the difcovery, the better it will be brought into use. But it's here, saith Pemble, as in discerning a thing a farre off, where one clear eye will see further then many that are dimme. and the greatest conjunction of unfurnished intellects affords not so much affishance for the Discovery, as the greater sight of a few may do. But in the executive part, there must be many hands to the work. If the Pa-Aours and people do not confent, it cannot be accomplished; and if they barely confent, and be not up and doing. Discoveries will lie dead, and nothing will go on: And if the Christian Magistrate aff rd not his affistance, his Guilt will be great, and the work will go the more heavily on. Though all the body be not an Eye, and therefore be not as good at Discovering as the Eye is; yet must each member perform its own office, and none be idle, or withdraw its helpe, because it is not an Eye; but all mnst execute by the Guidance of the Eye.

In order to the Discovery of the Healing Meanes, among others, this Rule is worthy our observation. If any Church Order, or administration feem effenfive to you, before you wholly caffit out, confider whether there be not somewhat that

is necessary and excellent either in the sub-stance, or in the Occasion and Reason of it: and you will find, that Reformation is to be accomplished more by Restauration of Ordinances and Administrations to their Primitive Nature and Use, then by the utter Abolition of them. Satan found it easier to corrupt the Ordinances of Christ, and to cause them to degenerate into somewhat like them, then to Introduce such of his own as were wholly new, and as Christ had given no Occasion of. I could give you very usefull instances in many

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many of the Popish administrations, which require a Restauration, rather then an Abolition, less that which is Christ's part, be cast out with that which is mans, and we should throw away the Apple which should be but pared; and less we cast away our necessary food, and most precious Jewels, because they have fallen into Romish dirt. But my present business is to instance only in Confirmation and Penitence, so farre as is requisite to the decision of the Question now before us.

I know you will eafily excuse me from the needless labour of explaining any terms in the Question which you understand already: I think the best method to lay the matter naked before your understandings, will be by approaches and degrees in the opening and confirming of these Propositions.

Prop. I. It is here supposed, that the Infants of Believers should by Baptism be admitted into the Church, and so be partakers of Infant Priveledges.

Heir finne and milery is come upon them without any actual consent of their own, by the will of others; and the Remedy must

be applyed to them accordingly, not by any actual consent of their own (which is as impossible) but by the will of others, as the Condition, and by the Gift of God as the Canfe. In his dealing with mankind; God is not so much more prone to wrath and vengeance then to Mercy, as to put Infants into the Comminatory terrible part of the Covenant, with their Parents, and not into the Remedying part; and to condemn them for their first Fathers Covenant breaking, and give them no belp from their gracious Parents Covenant keeping; and to fetch weight from Parents sinnes to weigh down the scale of Vindictive Instice, and to put nothing from the gracious Parents into the other end. Yet is it not to Infants as the meer Natural Mue of godly Parents, that God extendeth this Grace. But 1. As they are Naturally their Own , the Parents have a Power of them to dispose of them for their good. 2. Every man that is Sanctified, hath devoted himself. and in Generall, all that he hath to God; according to the feveral capacities of what he hath, that every thing may be for God in its proper Capacity. 3. Virtually then the Children of the Godly, even in the wombe are thus Devoted unto God. 4. It is the revealed Will of God, that Infants should - B 3

be Allually Dedicated and Devoted to him.

5 He that requireth us to make this Dedication, doth imply therein a promise of his Acceptance of what is Dedicated to him by his command. For his precepts are not vain or delusory.

6. He hath also expressly signified this in Scripture Promises, extending his Covenant to the feed of the Faithfull, and telling us that his Kingdom is of such.

7 This Dedication is to be made by Baptism, the Ordinance which God hath appointed to that End; and in which he is ready to signifie his Acceptance, that so there may be a mutual solemn Covenant.

The Servants of God before Christ's coming were enabled and required to enter their Infants into the Covenant of God, sometime (and ordinarily) in Circumcission, and sometime (as in the wilderness, Dent. 29) without it. And they have the same Natural Interest, and as large a discovery that it's the will of God, for the Dedicating of their Children, to God, and Choosing for them, and entering them into the holy Covenant, now as then. If then a Child that had no exercise of its own wi, might by the will of his Parents choose the Lord, and be entered into Covenant with him, it is then so still. God hath no where reverse or abrogated that Command,

which obliged Parents to enter their Children into Covenant with God, and Devote them to him Nay Christ chid those that would keep them from him, because his Kingdom, that is, his Church, is of such. A place that doth purposely and plainly express the continuance of his Love to Infants. and yet the Gospel entertaineth them as readily as the Law or Promise before did. Oft and again doth Christ signific to the fews that he would have gathered them wholly to his Church, and not have broken them off, if they had not by unbelief been broken off, and in the same Olive hath he engrassed the Gentile Church. Infants are members of all Commonwealths on the face of the earth. though they know not what a Commonwealth is, nor yet what foveraignty or subjection mean. And he that should say they are no members, because they are Imperfect members, would but be laughed at. And Christ hath not cast them out of his family or Commonwealth, nor thut the door against them.

And that in this Infant state they are capable of many Priveledges is apparent. They have Original sinne, which must be pardoned, or they are lost. Most of the Anabaptists that I hear of, do hold that all the

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Infants

Infants in the world are pardoned by Christ, and shall be saved if they die in Infancy, and run in the downright *Pelagian* road. But this is not only utterly unproved, but contrary to Scripture, which telleth us, that sinne is not pardoned by the bloodshed of Christ, till men be brought into Union with him, and participation of him, and for all his bloodshed, no man shall have pardon by it, till it be given him by the Act of Pardon in the Gospel. Now the Gospel no where gives out Pardon to every Infant in the world: Nay it frequently and plainly makes a difference. The Parents will doth Accept the offer, and choose for them that cannot choose for themselves. For others, what ever God will do with them, doubtless they have no promise of Mercy. And it's strange that they should deny Baptism to Infants that deny not Salvation to them, yea that think (though ungroundedly) that they are all in a state of Salvation. For either Infants have Original sinne, or not: If they have none, then they need no Saviour, and must be layed without a Saviour; for the whole need not the Physician, but the fick. If they have Original finne, and that it is pardoned to them by Christ, then how can men deny them the fign and feale of pardon, or the folemn investing means. If they are fure that they are washt with Christ's Blood, how can they deny to wash them with that water, that is appointed to fignifie and invest >

Moreover, Infants are capable of many other Priveledges; and of being the Adopted Sonnes of God, the Members of Christ, the Heirs of Heaven, as having Right thereto; and being the members of the Church, and being under the Special Protection and Provision of God, and in a special fort pareakers of the Prayers of the Church, with divers more. As in the Commonwealth, an Infant is capable of having Honour and Inheritance in Right, though not Actally to use them; and of the protection of the Laws for Life, Reputation and estate; and of being Tenant, and obliged to pay a certain Rent and Homage when he comes to age, and in the mean time to have Provisions from the Estate that he hath Title to.

But all this I have fuller exprest elsewhere: And I have lately read Mr Tombes's last and large Reply, to part of my Book, and many others; and must needs say that it leaves me fill perswaded that it is the will of Christ that the Infants of his Servants should be Dedicated to him in Baptism, and members of

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his visible Church; and though upon the review of my Arguments I find that I have used too many provoaking words, for which I am heartily forry, and desire pardon of God and him, yet I must say, that I am left more consider then before, that the cause is Gods which Mr Tombes opposeth: Of which if God will, I intend yet to give some surther account: In the mean time I deal with this but as a Supposition that is already sufficiently proved, though all men, yea all good men see not the sufficiency of the proofe.

Prop. 2. There are many Priviledges belonging to the Adult Members of the Church, which Infant members are not capable of.

This is true both of Natural and Moral Capacities: The Priviledges wich I mean are, the pardon of many actual finnes, committed fince they are Adult; the exercise of all Holy Graces; Knowing God; Loving him; Trusting him; Serving him; the Communion that we have with God herein; as particularly in Prayer, in holy Praises and Thanksgivings, in Heavenly Meditations; The Peace and Joy that followeth Believing, and the Hopes of Everlasting Life; the Communion

munion which we have with the Church of Christ in hearing, praying, Praises, the Sacrament of the Body and Blood of Christ, in distribution by giving and receiving, and an endearing holy Love within: These and many more Priveledges are proper to the Adult.

That Infants are not Naturally capable of these, is as needless to prove, as that they are Infants: And then that they are not Morally capable, is an inseparable consequent. For though Natural Capacity may be without Moral, yet Moral cannot be without Natural: In point of Duty, Insants are not bound to the work; as to Hear, Pray, Prayse, &c. beyond the Natural Capacity of their Intellects and bodies: And so in point of Benefit, we must have more sobriety, then to suppose God to make over any Benefit to them which they are not capable of. All this is plain.

Prop. 3. The Continuation of Priveledges rectived in Infancy, is part of the Priveledges of the Adult; or the Restoration of them if they be lost.

IF the cause discontinue, the effect will cease. Adult Priveled ges, comprehend the Insant

Infant Priviledges, partly as that which is Perfect comprehendeth the Imperfect, and partly as the whole comprehendeth the parts; and partly as the thing Continued is the same with the thing Begun. Infant Priviledges would all cease with Infancy, if the Causes or Conditions cease, and there be no other Cause for their continuance. God never took Infants into his Church and Covenant, with a purpose so to continue them, without any other Condition then that upon which they were admitted. This is past denyal, and will be more cleared in the next.

Prop. 4. The Title-Condition of Infant Church-membership and Priviledges, is not the same with the Title-Condition of the Church-membership and Priviledges of the

See the Rubrick of the Common Prayer Book before Confirmation after cited.

G. Cassin ier Consult. de Confirm. Hajusmidi sane InstituAdult; so that if this new Condition be not performed when men come to Age, their former Title ceaseth, and there is no other that ariseth in his stead.

I. VE are agreed I think, that our Title, (which is Fundament um Juris) is Gods Covenant, Graunt, or Guift. As it is his Precept that conflicut-

eth our Duty, so it is his Promise or Deed of Gist which is

our title to the Benefit.

2. And we are agreed I hope, that this Promise, or Grant from God is Conditional, For if Church-member. Thip and Priviledges be sololutly Given, then it is to All, or but to Some : Not to All; for then the Church, and the world are all one; and then it is not Ecclesia, catus evoeatus; and then Heathens and Infidels have right; which are things that no Christian, I think will grant: If it be but Some that have Title, then there must be some Note to

tionem seu Catechismi explicationem in pueris fieri debeere, dy Veteres pracipiunt, 6 Recenciores quoque ex utraque parte con-Sentiunt. Vide August. Serm. 116. in Ramis Palmarum, dy Wallafridum de rebus Ecclefiast. cap. 26. & que scripfit Ruardus Tappenus Lovan. Tom. 2. ad illud Calvini Inftit. c. 17.

know them by: or else the some will be equal to All or to None. And if they be Marked out, then it must be by Name or by Description: Not by Name; for we find the contrary. Scripture doth not Name all that have Title to Church Priviledges. If it be by Description, it is either by meer Physical, or by Moral Qualifications that they are described: The former, none doth imagine, that I hear of. If they are Moral Qualifications, then either they

they are such as are prerequisite to our Right and Priviledges, or not: That they are prerequisite all must confess that read the Promise, and all do confess that they are prerequisite to all the following Priviledges: And if Prerequisite, then either as Means or no Means. The later none can affirm, without going against so much light, as ordinary Christians have still ready at hand to consute them with: And if they are required as Means, then either as Causes or Conditions: And I think you will sooner yield them to be Conditions then Causes, though either Concessions sufficient to the end that is before us.

But of this we need to fay no more, both because it is commonly confessed, and because that the words of the Promises are so plaine, and undenyable, being uttered in Conditio-

nal terms.

Nor is this either inconfishent with, or any way unsuitable to an Absolute Decree: For as a Threatning, so the Conditionality of a Promise, are Instruments admirably suited to the accomplishment of an Absolute Purpose or Decree. He that is fully Resolved to save us, or to give us the Priviledges of his Church, will deal with us as men, in bringing us to the possession of the intended benefits; and therefore will by Threats and Conditional

ditional promises excite us to a careful persorm. ance of the Condition: and that Grace which is resolved to effett the very Condition in us, is also resolved to make a Conditional Promise, yea and a Threatening the Infrument of effe-

Hing it.

3. Note, that the great Question, whether all the Infants of true Believers are certainly Justified, or whether some of them have but lower Priviledges, is not here to be determined . but , in a fitter place : And therefore I determine not what Priviledges they are that will cease, if our Infant Title cease. But that according to the tenour of the Promise, the Continuance of them, with the Addition of the Priviledges proper to the Adult, are all

laid upon a New Condition.

4. Note also, that when I call it another or different Condition, I mean not that it is different in the Nature of the Act, but in the Agent or Subject. It is the same kind of Faith which at first is required in the Parent, for the Childs behoof, and that aftreward is required in our selves. But the Condition of the Infants Title is but this, that he be the Child of a Believer, Dedicated to God: But the Condition of the Title of persons at Age is, that they be themselves Believers, that have Dedicated themselves to God. The

Faith

Faith of the Parent, is the Condition of Infant Title; and the Faith of the person himself, is the Condition of the Title of one

at Age.

That their own Faith is not the Condition of an Infants Title, I think I need not prove: For 1. They are uncapable of Believing without a Miracle: 2. If they were not (as some Lutherans fondly think) yet it's certain that we are uncapable of discerning by such a sign. I think no Minister that I know will judge what Infants do themselves believe, that he may baptise them. 3. And I think no man that looks on the Command, or Promise, and the Person of an Infant, will judge that he is either Commanded then to believe, or that his Believing is made the Condition of his Infant Title

But that a Personal Believing is the Condition of the Title of them at Age, is as farre

past doubt: and it's proved thus.

Arg. 1. The Promise it self doth expressly require a Faith of our own, of all the Adult that will have part in the Priviledges: therefore it is a Faith of our Own that is the Condition of our Title, Mark 16 16 He that Believeth and is Baptized skall be saved, and he that Believeth not skall be damned, Act. 8. 36, 37. And the Euunch said, See here is wa-

ter, what doth hinder me to be haptized? And Philip said, If thou believest with all thy heart, thou maist, AA. 2.38, 41. Repent and be haptized every one of journ the Name of Jesus Christ for the Remission of sinnes, &c. Then they that gladly received his word were haptized, AA. 10.44, 47, 48. AA. 16.14, 15. & 30.32, 33. Rom. 10.12, 13, 14. With many other Texts, do put this out of doubt.

Argament 2. We were engaged in our Infant baptismal Covenant to Believe and Repent, when we came to Age, as a means to our reception of the Benefits of the Covenant, proper to the Adult: therefore we must perform our Covenant, and use this means, if we will have the benefits.

Arg. 3. If another Condition were not of Necessity to the Aged, beside the Condition that was necessary to them in Infancy, then Turks, fews, and Heathens, should have right to Church-membership, and Priviledges of the Adult: But the Consequent is notoriously false: therefore so is the Ante-cedent.

The Reason of the Consequent is evident. Because a man that hath believing Parents, may turn Turk (asis known in thousands of fanizaries) or few, or Pagan: and there-

fore fore

fore if it were enough, that he was the Child of a Believer, his Title to Church Priviledges would still continue. And so among professed Christians, the Child of a Believer may turn Heretick, or notoriously prophane and scandalous, and yet have Title to Church Priviledges, if his first Title still hold, and a personal Faith be not a necessary Condition of his Right. Adde to these the many Arguments tending to confirm the point in hand, which I have laid down on another occasion in my Disputations of Right to Sacraments. But I think I need not spend more words to perswade any Christians, that our Parents Faith will not serve to give us Title to the Church Priviledges of the Adult, but we lose our Right even to Church-membership it self, if when we come to Age, we adde not a perfonal Faith (or profession at least) of our own.

I only adde that this is a truth so farre past doubt, that even the Papists and the Greeks have put it into their Canons. For the former, you may find it in the Decrees, Part. 3. dist. 3. pag. (mihi) 1241. cited out of Augustinin these words Parvulus qui baptizatur, si ad annes rationales veniens, non crediderit, nec ab illicitis abstinuerit, nihil ei prodest, quod parvulus accepit. That is, An Infant that

that is baptized, if comming to years of disoretion, he do not believe, nor abstain from things unlawfull, that which he received in Infancy,

doth profit him nothing. And for the Greeks, that this is according to their mind, you may fee in Zonaras in Comment. in Epist. Canon Can. 45. cited ex Basilii Mag. Epist. 2. ad Amphiloch. thus Signis accepto nomine Christianismi, Christum contumelià afficit, nulla est illi appellationis utilitas: that is; If any one having received the Name of Christianity, shall repreach Christ, he hath no profit by the Name. On which Zonaras addeth Qui Christo credidit . & Christianus appellatus est , cum ex Divinis praceptis vitam instituere oportet, ut bas ratione Deus per ipsum glorificetur, quem. admodum illis verbis pracipitur, sic luceat Lux vestra coram hominibus, &c. Signisautem nominatur quidem Christianus, Dei vero pracepta transgreditur, centumeliam irrcgat Christo, cuius de nomine appeliatur, nec quicquam ex ea appellatione utilitatis trabit: That is, Seeing he believed in Christ, and is called a Christian, ought to order his life by the Commandements of God, that so God may be glorified by him; according to that [Let your light so shine before men, &c.] It am one that is called a Christian, shall transgress Gods

Commands,

Commands, he brings a reproach on Christ, by whose name he is called; and he shall not receive the least profit by that Title, or Name. This is somewhat higher then the point needs, that I bring it for.

And indeed, it were a strange thing, if all other Insidels should be shut out of the Priviledges of the Church, except only the treacherous Covenant-breaking Insidel; (for such are all that being baptized in Insancy, prove no Christians when they come to Age.) As if persidiousness would give him right.

Prop. 3. As a Personal Faith is the Condition before God of Title to the Priviledges of the Adult; so the Profession of this Faith, is the Condition of his Right before the Church; and Without this Profession, be is not to be taken as an Adult member, ner admitted to the Priviledges of such.

His Proposition also, as the Sunne, revealeth its self by its own light, and therefore commandeth me to say but little for the Confirmation of it.

Arg. 1. The Church cannot judge of things unknown: Honentium, & non apparentium eadem of ratio: Not to appear, and

not to be, is all one as to the judgment of the Church. We are not searchers of the heart; and therefore we must judge by the discoveries of the heart, by outward signes.

Arg. 2. If Profession of Faith were not necessary Coram Ecclesia to mens Church-membership and Priviledges, then Insidels and Heathens would have Right, as was said in the former case, and also the Church and the world would be consounded, and the Church would be no Church: But these are consequents that I hope no Christians will have a favourable thought of: and therefore

they should reject the Antecedent.

Arg. 3. It is a granted case among all Christians, that Profession is thus necessary: the Apostles and Ancient Churches admitted none without it: nor no more must we. Though all require not the same manner of Prosession, yet that Profession it self is the least that can be required of any man, that layeth claim to Church Priviledges and Ordinances proper to Adult members: this we are all agreed in, and therefore I need not adde more proof, where I find no Controversion.

But yet as commonly as we are agreed on this, yet because it is the very point which most of the Aress of our present Disputation

C3 lieth

lieth on, it may not be amiss to foresee what may possibly be Objected by any new comers hereafeter.

Object. Perhaps some may say, 1. That we find no mention of Professions required in Scriputure: 2. It is not probable that Peter received a Profession from those thousands whom he so suddenly Baptized. 3 Our Churches have been true Churches without such a Profession, personally and distinctly made: therefore it may be so still. To these

briefly, yet satisfactorily!

1. The Scripture gives us abundant proof that a plain Profession was made in those times by fuch as were baptized at Age, and fo admitted (by reason of their ripeness and capacity) into the Church, and to the speciall Communion and Priviledges of the Adult at once. To fay much of the times of the old Testament, or before Christ, would be but to interrupt you with less pertinent things: Yet there it is apparent, that all the people were solemnly engaged in Covenant with God, by Moses, more then once: and that this was renewed by Joshua, and other godly Princes; and that Asa made the people not only enter into a Covenant to feek the Lord God of their fathers. With all their bearts, and with all their Soul: But that Who (0mhosoever would not seek him should be put to death, whether smal or great, man or woman: And they [ware to the Lord with a loud voice, and with shoutings, and with trumpets, and With cornets, 2 Chron. 15. 12, 13, 14. So. following Princes called the people to this open Covenanting. But this is not all: To take the Lord only to be their God, (with the rest of the Law) was the very. essence of an Isarelites Religion, which they did not only openly Profess, but excessively sometimes glory in. As Circumcifion fealed the Covenant (and therefore supposed the Covenant) to Infants and aged whoever were circumcifed; fo had they many forts of Sacrifice, and other worship, in which they all were openly to profess the same Religion and Covenant. Many Purifications also, and Sanctifyings of the people they had: and many figures of the Covenant. I am the Lord thy God, &c. Thou shalt have no other Gods before me, &c. was the tenour of the Covenant which every Israelite expressly and by frequent acts professed to consent to: The Law is called a Covenant, which all were to own, and avouch the Lord to be their God, and themselves his people. See Deut. 26. 17, 18. & chap. 29. 10, 11, 14, &c. 2 King. 23.3. 2 Chron. 23. 3, 16. & chap. 29. 10. 24 Confirmation & Restauration the Necessary

Ezr. 10. 3. Neb. 9. 38. Plal. 50. 5. Lzek. 20. 37. Fer. 50. 5. Ila. 56. 4, 5. Exod. 34. 27. Plal. 103. 18. & 25. 10. & 18. 10, &c.

And yet I hope no Chhistian would wish that we should deal no more openly and clearly with God, the Church, and our selves, in daies of Gospel Light and worship, then the fews were to do in their darker state, under obscure Types and shadows.

We find that when John Baptist set up his Ministry, he caused the people to Cenfess their sinnes, Matth. 3. 6. And if we confess our sinnes, Godis faithfull and just to forgive us our sinnes, I Joh. 1. 19. And whereas some say, that John Baptized them, that he calleth a Generation of Vipers; I Answer, I. We will believe that when they prove it. It seems rather that he put them back. 2. If he did Baptize them, it was not till they Confessed their sinnes (before that all did,) and it seems by his charge, till they promised to bring forth sfruits meet for Repentance, Math. 3.8.

Christ would not have so instructed Nicodemus in the Nature and necessity of Regeneration, before he was a Disciple, if a Professed or Apparent preparation had not been necessary. Nor would he ordinarily have

taught

saught men the Necessity of denying themfelves, and for aking all for a treasure in Heaven, with such like, if they would be his Disciples, if the Profession of so doing had not been Necessary, to their visible Di-

scipleship.

I grant that so sull a Profession was not made before Christs Resurrection as after: For many Articles of our Belief were afterward made Necessary: And the Apostles themselves were unacquainted with what the weakest Christian did afterwards believe. But still the Essentials of Faith, then Necessary in existence to mens Justification, were Necessary in Profession to mens visible Christianity

or Church membership.

As to those Alls. 2. 37. &c. It is plain, that they made an open Profession, if you Consider 1. That they were openly told the Doctrine which they must be baptized into, if they did consent: 2. It is said, They that gladly received that word, were baptized.

3. It is certain therefore that they first testified their glad reception of the Word.

4. We may not imagine that Peter was God, or knew the hearts of all those thousands, and therefore he must know it by their Profession, that they gladly received the Word.

5. Their own mouths cry out for advice in order to their

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their Salvation. 6. It had been abfurd for the Apostles to attempt to baptize men; that had not first professed their Consent. 7. The Scripture gives us not the full historical Narration of all that was faid and done in such Cases, but of so much as was Necessary. 8. The Institution and Nature of the Ordinance tells us, that Baptism could not be administred without a Profession, to the Adult: For they were to be Baptzed into the Name of Father, Sonne, and Holy Ghost, and therefore were to profess that they believed in Father, Sonne, and Holy Ghoft. Yea the very receiving of Baptism was an Astuall Profession. 9. The constant Practice of the Universal Church, hath given us by infallible Tradition, as full affurance of the order of Baptism, and in particular of an Exprss Profesfion and Covenant then made, as of any point that by the hands of the Church can be received by us. 10. And it was in those daies a more notorious Profession to be so Baptized, and to joyn in the holy Affemblies then now it is. When the Profession of Christianity did hazard mens liberties, estates, and lives, to be openly then Baptized upon Covenanting with God the Father, Sonne, and Holy Ghost, and openly joyn with a hated, persecuted fort of men, was

an eminent fort of Profession. It being also usually Private in houses, as separated from the main body of the people, and not in publike places like ours, where men are (juftly) driven to come as leaners for instruction.

Moreover, it's faid of all that were Baptized (being then at Age) that they first Believed: And how could the Baptizers know that they believed, but by their Profession: Yea, it's said of Simon Magus, that he Believed and was Baptized; which (though he might really have some historical Faith, yet) implyeth, that he openly Professed more then he indeed had, or else he had scarce been Baptized. Which hath caused Interpreters to judge, that by Faith is meant a Profession of Faith. And if fo, then sure a Profession was still Necessary.

Yea, Christ in his Commission directeth his Apostles to make Disciples, and then Baptize them; promising, that he that believeth and is Baptized shall be saved. And who can tell whether a man be a Disciple, a Believer,

or an Infidel, but by his Profession.

How was it known but by their Profession, that the Samaritans Believed Philip, preaching the things concerning the Kingdom of God. and the Name of Jesus Christ, before they were Baptized both men and women? Act. 8.12.

Philip

Philip caused the Ennuch to profess before he would Baptise him, that he believed that Issue Christ is the Sonne of God; which upon his teaching the rest, did import the rest, if it were not more fully (as is likest) Professed, Att. 8 37, 38.

Saul had more then a bare Profession be-

fore Baptism, Alts 9. 5, 15, 17.

Cornelins and his company had a Profession and more, for they had the Holy Ghost powered on them, speaking With tongues, and magnifying God: (that use of the gist of tongues imparting more then the gift it self,) Atts 10. 46. Yea, the Spirit bid Peter, Go and not doubt, Ads 11.12. And it was such a gift of the Spirit, as caused the Aposteles to conclude, that God had granted the Gentiles Repentance unto life, Ads 11.18.

How was it known but by their Profession?
Acts 11. 21. That that great number Believed and turned to the Lord, And the Grace of God was such as Barnabas saw, vers. 23.

And when Saul after his Biptism assayed to joyn himself to the Disciples at ferusalem, they so suspected him, that they would not receive him, till Barnabas took him and brought him to the Apostles, and declared to them, how God had dealt with him, and how bo ldly at Damasem he had presched in

the

the Name of Jesus; which shews that they admitted not men to their Communion, till their Profession seemed Credible to them. For no doubt but Saul told them himself that he was a Believer, before he was put to make use of the testimony of Barnabas.

The Converted Gentiles, Acts 13. 48. shewed their Belief and gladness, and openly glorified the Word of the Lord. How but by a Profession did it come to pass, that the great multitude at Iconium, both Jews and Greeks, were known to be Believers, Acts 14. 1. The same I may say of the Jaylour, Atts 16. Who by works as well as words declared his Conversion. And the Bereans, Acts 17. 12. And the Athenians, Acts 17. 34. And Crispus with the Corintbians, Acts 18. 8.

Acts 19. 18. The believing Ephefians, Confessed and shewed their deeds, and many of them burnt as many of their Books of ill Arts

as came to fifty thousand pieces of silver.

In a word, it is the standing Rule, that If thou confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and believe in thy heart that God raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved; For with the heart man believeth unto Rightconsnes: and with the mouth Confession is made unto Salvation. He that bids us Receive him that is weak in the Faith, but not to doubtfull disturtations.

tations, implieth, that we must not receive them that Profess not at least a weak Faith. Heb. 5. & 6. 1, 2, 3. Shew that the Principles of the Dostrine of Christ, were first laid as the Foundation; before Baptism. And who received those Principles could not be known but by a Profession.

To this let me adde, that Panitentiam agere was judged by the Ancient Doctours, the Repentance that was prerequifite to Baptism: and that is, A manifested, professed Re-

pentance.

Gods order is (to the Adult) first to send Preachers to proclaim the Gospel; and when by that men are brought so sarre, as to Profess or manifest that their eies are opened, and that they are turned from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, then must they be Baptized, for the Remission of their sinnes, and to receive the Inheritance among the Sanstified by Faith in Christ, Acts 26.17, 18.

As their sinnes are not forgiven them till they are Converted, Mark 4. 12. So they must not be Baptised for the forgiveness of sinnes, till they Profess themselves Converted: Sceing to the Church non esse, & non apparere is all one. Repentance towards God, and Fairb towards our Lord fesus Christ, is

the fumme of that Preaching that maketh Disciples. Atts 20. 21. And therefore both these must by Profession seem to be received, before any at age are Baptized.

If as many as are Baptized into Christ, are Baptized into his death; and are buried with him by Baptism into his death, that like as Christ was raised from the dead, so we also Bould walk in Newness of life, Rom. 6. 4,5. Then no doubt but such as were to be Baptized, did first Protess this mortification, and a consent to be buried and revived with Christ, and to live to him in Newness of life. For Paul was never so much for the Opus operatum above the Papfts, as to think that the Baptizing of an Infidel, might effect these high and excellent things. And he that Professeth not Faith, nor ever did, is to the Church an Infidel.

In our Baptism we put off the body of the sinnes of the flesh, by the Circumcision of Christ, being buried with him, and rising With him through Faith - quickned with bim, and having all our trepasses forgiven, Col. 3.11,12,13. And will any man, yea, will Paul, ascribe all this to those that did not so much as Profess the things signified, or the necessary Condition? Will Baptism, in the judgment of a wife man, do all this for an Infidel.

3.2 Confirmation & Reftautation the Necessary

Infidel, or one that Professeth not to be a Christian ?

Baptism is said to save us. 1 Pet. 3. 21. And therefore they that will be Baptized must profess the qualifications necessary to the Saved.

The Key's of the Kingdom of Heaven are put into the Churches hands; and they that are loofed on Earth shall be loofed in Heaven (if the Key do not erre) And therefore Paflours of the Church must absolve none (by Baptism) that do not by Profession seem to be Absolvable in Heaven: They must Profels to have the old man Crucified with Christ. that the Body of sinne might be destroyed, that benceforth they might not serve sinne, Rom. 6. 5, 6, 7, 8.

As many as have been Baptized into Christ, have put on Christ; and are all one in Christ Fesus: and are Abrahams Seed, and Heirs, according to promise, Gal. 3.27, 28, 29. This speaks the Apostle of the Probability grounded on a credible Profession. And thereforeit is clear, that the Profession was presuppofed, that might support this charitable judgment. Our Baptism is the Solemnizing of our Marriage with Christ. And its a new and firang kind of Marriage, where there is no Profession of Consent.

The Baptized are in Scripture called men Washed, Sanctified, Instified, &c. 1 Cor. 6. 11. 1 Cor. 14. 33. They are all called Saints, and Churches of Saints, I Cor. I. 2. All Christians are called Santtified ones, or Saints; therefore its certaine that they professed themselves such.

But why should I go any further in this, when the main substance of my Dispute of Right to the Sacraments proves it? I intreat the Reader that would have more, to prove not only the Necessity of a Profession, but also of the Profession of a Saving Faith, to peruse that Book, or at least the second Disputation, where are Twenty Arguments for it; and the sence of all the Ancient Churches there cited out of Mr Gatakers Collections. See also Dr Hammonds many testimonies to prove the use of the Abrenuntiatien, Paranes. pag. 18, 19, 20. I love not needlefly to recite whath others have already cited. But he that knows not, that the Universal Church from the daies of the Apofiles, hath baptized the Adult, upon a perfonal Profession of Faith, and Repentance, and Vow, or Promise, or Covenant for obedience, knows little of what the Church hath Practised. And I hope sew sober men will be found that will be fo fingular and felfconceited.

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conceited, as to contradict the Practife of the Universal Church in such a case as this, and set up their own private judgment against it, and go about to perswade us to a new way of Church enterance, and admission, now in the end of the world. Blame me not to be consident with you, where I have so good ground as Scripture, and so good company, as the Primitive Universal Church.

To this let me adde, that most or too many, that we are to receive to the Priviledges of Adult members, have violated their Baptilm Covenant, and proved ungodly after Baptism, and that by open, notorious Scandals. Now Scripture, and the Practice of the Universal Ancient Church direct us, to require of these an open Consession of sinne: For they need an Absolution, and not a meer Confirmation. It is past all controversie, that such have both an open Confession and Profession to make. Yea, how scrupulous the Ancient Church was of Receiving and Absolving such violators of the Baptismal Covenant; and on how severe terms they did it, is known to all, that know any thing of those times. I pray amongst others fee what Grotins (Discus. Apol. River, pag. 221, 222.) cheth from Lonaus, Tertulian, Pacimus, Hierom, &cc. ad pag. 235. n.

And

And as to the last Objection (that our Churches were true Churches, when we made no particular Professions.) I Answer I. Without some Profession of true Christianity, our Churches could not have been true Churches. And therefore against those that would prove them no Churches, we plead (and justly) that a Profession was made by them. 2. But I pray you mark, that that will prove a Church to be a true Church , which will not prove every person in the Parish, to be a true Member of that Church. 3. And he that thinks it enough, that our Churches have a meer Metaphysical Verity, (such as Bishop Hall, and multitudes of Learned Protestants allow the Church of Rome it felf) is as good a friend to it, as he is so his wife or child, that will let them go naked; yea, and be contented, that they catch the plague, or leaprofie, yea, and plead for it too; and all, because they have fill the Truth of Humane Nature.

I know that any thing that may truly be called a Profession, will (in that point) seem to prove the Being of the Church. But as it will not seem to prove the well-being; so an obscure Profession doth but obscurely prove the Being of it: which an open, plain Prosession doth more clearly prove. Let us

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not befriend either the Kingdom of darkne's, or the Seperatifts so much, as to leave
our Churches so open to their exceptions,
and so apt to cherish and befriend their ignorance, and insidelity of the world. If coming to Church, and sitting there be somewhat a probable argument, that men do implicitly believe, as that Church believes; yet,
it's a very dark proof, that they understand
what the Church believes: especially when
experience hath acquainted us with the Contray of many of them.

But now I have said this much for a personal and plain Profession, I would saine know what any man hath against it. The Church through the great mercy of God, hath yet liberty to use it. And we see how many thousands make a blind kind of shew of Christianity, going from one publike duty to ano-

Albaspin. in Tertul.de Præscript. c. 43.p.
308. Non nisi magna cum deliberatione
quenquam in societatem docommunionem
Ecclesiarum
venire patiebantur

ther, and knowing not what they do. And is there not need that they should be brought out into the open light, and see their way? If Covenanting with God the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, be the Essence of our Christianity; in the Name of God, I desire you to consider whether it be

a thing to be hudled up in the dark? Unless it be mens design to hide the Nature of Christianity, and keep people in destructive ignorance, and delude their Souls with a name and thew of a Religion. which they understand not: they will furely be willing that men should know the Covenant that they make, and understand what they do, before they enter into a Marriage bond with Christ, (if at Age)

Ait igitur din multumque Orthadoxos deliberare, quorum Sententiis Subscribere, quofve in societatem ejusdem Ecclesie de corporis recipere debeant : contra vero bereticos ullo discrimine cum omnibus hareticis pacem miscere.

or own it, if they have been entered in infancy. Why should we choose Darkness rather theo Light? Why should an Implicit Covenant and Profession be pleaded for? when the being of a Profession is palam fateri, openly to make known; and when we know by fad experience, that when we have all done the best we can, to make our ignorant people understand, we shall find enough ado to accomplish it. Ignorance hath no need of frendship: especially from Ministers it deserveth none: especially in so great a point as the Covenant that men make with Christ. We have wares that deserve the light, and need not a dark shop. We have a Master

that we need not be affraid, or ashamed, explicitly and publickly to confess. It befeemes not fo high and honourable a Professi. on as that of a Christian, to be lapt up in obscurity. Such a Glorious state as Sonneship to God, to be an Heir of Heaven, &c. should be entered into with great solemnity, and owned accordingly at our first rationall acceptance and acknowledgment. Kings are Crowned more folemnly, then poor men take possession of their cottages. Christ will be ashamed of them before the Angels, that are ashamed of him before men, and will confess them before his Father, that confess him before men. Christianity is not a game to be plaid under board. Why then should any be against an open Professing, and Covenanting with Christ? If it be needfull that we Covenant, certainly the plainest and most explicite Covenanting is the best. And what will be his portion, that hath a male in his flock, and offereth the worst, yea the halt and blind to God?

Let us therefore deal as openly, and plainly, and understandingly in the Covenant of God as we can, and not contrive it in the greatest darkness that is consistent with the Essence of a Church. Nay let us not tempt men to unchurch us, or separate from us, by leaving our cause to such Arguments as this: [such a man fitteth among other hearers. in the Congregation: therefore he maketh a Profession of the Christian Faith;] lest they think it followeth not [therefore he seemeth to understand the Christian Faith; 7 much less The Professeth it: Tespecially when it's known that fo many understand it not: and that the Papills in their writings, maintain it lawfull, for them to be present Vid. Thom, à at our Assemblies; and Infidels Jesu de Contell us, that they ean hear vers. Omn. Gentium de hac any man, and do come thither.

Nehemiah caused the fews

to subscribe the Covenant, and seal it, (c 9. v.38.) Even under the Law it was the character of visible Saints, to make a Covenant with God by Sacrifice, Pfal. 50. 5. At least now God bath cansed us topass under the Red. Let us yield to be brought under the bend of the Covenant, Ezek. 20. 37. And let us as weeping Israel and Judah, Seek the Lord our God, and ask the Bay to Zion, with our faces thitherward, saying; come and let us joyne our selves to the Lord, in a perpetual Covenant, that shall not be forgotten, Jer. 50 4,5. Let us take held of bis Covenant, and cheose the things that please him, that he may bring us into bisholy Monstain, and make us joyfull

in his house of Prayer, and our Sacrifices may be accepted on bis Altar, Isa. 56. 4, 6, 7. Are not these the daies of which it is said. Ila. 44. 3. 4. 5. I will poure mater on him that is thirfty, and floods upon the dry ground: I will poure my Spirit on thy feed, and my bleffing on thine offspring; and they shall spring as among the grass, as willows by the water courfes. One shall say, I am the Lords; and another shall call himself by the name of facob, and another shall subscribe with his hand unto the Lord; and surname himself by the name of Israel. I would have as little Covenanting for doubtfull, or needles, or mutable things, in Church or State, as is possible: but in the great things of our Salvation, even the Essence of Christianity, we cannot be bound too fast, nor deal too understandingly, and openly with God.

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Prop. 6. It is not every kind of Profession, that is the Condition, or necessary qualification of these that are to be admitted to the Priviledges of Adult members, but such a Profession as God bath made nesessary, by his express Word, and by the Nature of the Object, and the Uses, and Ends, to which be doth require it.

He Negative is not controverted among Lus. If any were so quarrelsom or ignorant , it's easily proved. And I shall do it briefly, but satisfactorily, in the opening of the Affirmative.

I have proved in my first Disputation of Right to Sacraments, (which I desire the Reader, that would have further satisfaction, to peruse) the Necessity of these following Qualifications of this Profession.

I. In General, as to the Object of our Faith, it must be a Profession of true Christianity, and no less. It must be a Profession of our entertainment, both of the Truth of the Gospel, and of the Good therein Revealed and offered. More particularly, it must be a Profession, that we believe in God the Father, Sonne, and Holy Ghost, as to the Nature, persons, and works, which they have done or undertaken for us. Yet more particularly, and explicitly: It must be a Profession, 1. That we Believe in God the Father, and so the pure Deity, as our Creatour, Soveraign, and chief Good, who gave us the Law of Nature, by breaking of which, we have lost our felves, and all our part in Everlasting Life. 2. That we Believe in Jesus Christ, God and Man, that taking our Nature, fulfilled the Law, overcame the Devil, dyed as a Sacrifice for our sinnes, Rose again, and conquired death, ascened into Heaven, where he is Lord of all, and the King, Prophet, and Priest of his Church, in Glory with the Father: That he hath offered himself with Pardon, and Eternal Life, to all that will accept him, on his terms: and that he will come again at last to Raise us from death, and judge the world, and Justifie his Saints, and bring them to Eternal Glory, and cast the wicked into utter misery. 3. That we Believe in God the Holy Ghoft, that Inspired the Prophets and Apostles, to deliver, and confirm the Word of God, and who is the Sanctifier of all that shall be faved, illuminating their understandings; & changing their hearts and lives, humbling them for their finne and misery, causing them to believe in Christ, the

the Remedie, and heartily and thankfully accept him; Possessing them with an hearty Love of God, and a heavenly mind, and a hatred of finne, and Love of Holineis, and turning the principal bent of their hearts and lives, to the Pleasing of God, and the attaining of Eternal Life. This much must be believed, and the Belief of this much, must be somehow Professed.

2. As to the Atts of the thing Professed, it must be, not only the naked Affent of the Understanding; but both this Affent that the Gospelis true, and a Confent of the Will, to take God the Father, Sonne, and Holy Ghost, to the forementioned Ends, in the forementioned Relations; and to give up our felves unfeignedly to him, renouncing the

flesh, the world, and the Devil.

3. As to the Nature of the Profession it self. 1. It must in General be Credible: For no man is bound to Believe that which is Incredible. The words are the figns of the mind, and as fuch they are to be uttered, and received. If they be contrary to the mind, they are false; and if wilfully contrary, they are a lie: And God doth not make a lie to be the Condition of Church membership, or Priviledges; nor doth he bind his Ministers, or Church, to believe a known lie; Nothing

Nothing but Real, or feeming truth is to be

Therefore it is to be made at years of understanding. The Papilts themselves say in their Catechism, composed for the Armenians . Translated by Piter Paulus. pag 194. Tum recipiendum est Sacramentum boc, quando ad usum rationis pervenit bomo, tidemque profiteri incipit, de at confirmetur, destabiliatur in gratia opus habet.

believed. 2. More particularly, the Profession which we speak of, must have these Qua. lifications.

1. It must be, or seem to be Understanding. Ignorantis non oft Consensus. It a Parrat could say the Creed, it were not a Credible Profession of Faith. Therefore the Ancient Church was wont by Catechists, to prepare them to understand, the Doetrine which they were to believe, and profess. This is past Controversie. I think no Minister would take that mans Profesfion, that seemeth not to Understand what he faith.

2. No Profession is Credible, but that which is, or

seems to be serious. He that speaks in scorn, or jest, is not to be believed, as one that speaks his mind; nor is it to pass for a Profestion.

3. No Profession is credible or sufficient, but that which is, or feems to be Free and Voluntary. Though some force, or out-

ward urgencies in some cases may help to incline the will, yet Willing it must be; or it is not a Credible Profession.— He that Professeth himself a Christian, when a sword or Pistol is at his brest, is not to be Credited, if he continue it not when he is free. And also that which is done in a meer Passion without Deliberation, is not to be taken as the act of the Man, and a true expression of the bent of his mind; unless he asterwards stand

to it upon Deliberation.

4. It must be a Profession not nullified by a contradiction in word or deed. Though their may an obscure contradiction, not understood, confist with it; or a contradiction only in Degree; as Lord I believe, help thou my anbelief : yet there must be no contradiction of the Effentials of our Profession, that nullifieth it, by shewing that we lie, or speak against the bent of our hearts. If a Minister can by contrary words or deeds disprove the Profession of the party, he is not to believe it, or accept it. For we are not to believe without Evidence of Credibility, much less against it. I have given inflances of this in the foresaid Disputation of Sacracrament, pag. 10.

5. When by Covenant-breaking, and Perfidiousness, or often Lying, a man is become Incredible, having forfeited the Credit of his word, with wife and charitable men, this man must give us a Practical, as well as Verbal Profession, before we can again admit him, to the Priviledges of the Church. For though we are not to be so strict, as some old Fathers scem to have been, and the Novations were, that would not admit such Penitents again into the Church at all, but leave them to Gods own Judgment; yet must we not go against Reason and Scripture, and the Nature of the thing, in believing that which is not to be believed; nor to cast by all Order and Discipline, and prostitute Gods Ordinances to the lufts of men, and make them a scorn, or level the Church of Christ with the world.

The Testimonies cited by me on another occasion, in the soresaid Disputations, shew the Judgment of Protestants in these Points, and somewhat of the Judgment of Antiquity. I shall recite but those on the Title page of the third Disputation.

Tertullian Apologet. cap. 16. Sed dices etiam de nostris, excedere quosdam à Regulis disciplina. Desinunt tum Christiani haberi penes nes: Philosophi verò illi cum talibus sartis, in Nomine & honore Sapientia perseverant: that is, But you'l say, that even of ours.

ours, some (marve from (or forsake) the Rules of Discipline.

Answ. They cease then to be counted Christians with m: But your Philosophers with Such deeds, do keep the Name and honeur of

Wildom.

The Judgment of the French Professours at Saumours, you have in these words, Thef. Salmuriens. vol. 3. pag. 39. Thef. 39. Sacramenta non conferentur nifi iis, qui vel findem kabent vel saltem cam præ se ferant, adeò ut nullis certis argumentis compertum effe possite, cam esse ementitam: that is, Sacraments are conferred on none, but those that either have Faith, or at least pretend (or Profess) to have it, so that it cannot by any certain Arguments be proved to be feigned.

The Judgment of the Scottish Divines, may be much discovered in these two Testimonies following: Gillespie, Aaron's Rod Blossoming, pag. 514. TI believe no consciencious Minister would adventure to Baptise one; who hath manifost and infallible signs of univegeneration. Sure we cannot be answerable to God, if we should minister Baptism, to a man whose works and words, do manifestly declare him to be an unregenerated, unconverted Ferfen And if we may not initiate Inch a one how Shall we bring him to the Lords Table] Rutherford, Due Right of Presbyteries, pag. 231. n. 2. But faith Robinson, most of England, are ignorant of the sirst Rudiments and Foundations of Religion; and therefore cannot be a Church.

Answ. Such are materially not the Visible Church, and have not a Profession; and are to be taught; and if they will fully remain in

that darkness, are to be cast out.

If you would have the Testimonies of Protestants, you may read above threescore of them, expressly maintaining that it is a Profession of Saving Faith that is prerequisite to to our Right of Sacraments, cited in my forementioned Disputation second. To which I adde 33. more, cited to a like purpose in my sist Disputation of Sacraments: And to these adde the large testimony of Davenant, with his many Arguments, on Colos. 1. vers. 18. too large to recite.

And for the later fort of Episcopal Divines, that they also agree in the same, I will satisfie you from an Eminent man among them, Mr Herbert Thorndike, in his Discourse of the Right of the Church, pag. 31, 32. where he saith [And hereby we see how binding and loosing sinnes, is attributed to the Keyes of the Church: Which being made a Visible Society, by the power of bolding Assemblies, to which

means of Reformation and Reconciliation. 49

no man is to be admitted, till there be just prefumption, that he is of the Heavenly ferusalem, that is above. I shall adde more from him anon.

Somewhat I have elswhere cited, of the Fathers Judgments in this Point, and more anon I shall have occasion so produce. But in a Point that we are agreed on (that is not Every Profession, but only a Credible Profession of true Christianity, even of Faith and Repentance, that must be taken as Satisfactory by the Church) I hope I may spare any surther proof.

Prop. 7. The Profession of those that expession the Church state and Priviledges of the Adult is to be tried, judged, and Approved by the Pastours of the Church, to whose Office it is that this belongeth.

This Proposition hath two parts: 1. That it is not a Profession untryed, and unsapproved, that must serve the turn. 2. That the trying and approving of it, belongeth to the Office of the Passours of the Church.

The first is grounded by almost all Christians that I know of, and therefore need not

many words.

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1. If every man should be the sole Judge of the foundness, and validity of his own Profession, then Hereticks, and Heathens, and Infidels may all croud into the Church : for when there is any outward advantage, or other common motive to induce them to it, they would all joyn with the Church: as if they were Christians. And we see that it is the custom of Hereticks to intrude: And who shall fay to any of them, why do you so, if themselves are the only Judges? We meet daily among our own neighbours, with abundance that know not whether Christ be God or man; nor who he is, nor what he hath done for us, nor why he came into the world, and are ignorant of almost all the Esfentials of the Christian Faith; and with abundance more that live in common drankenness, scorning at holy duties, and at a Godly life, and hating those that use it, and giving up themselves wholly to the slesh, and the world: And yet all these men are so confident of the soundness, and validity of their own Profession, that they will hate that Minister, that shall make any question of their Right to the Priviledges of the Church. I speak not by hearsay, or conjecture, but by fad experience. And if they be their own Judges, all these will be approved, and admitted:

mitted; and indeed, what man would not be admitted where Christianity is in credit, or hath any worldly advantages? fo that it's certain, that this would pluck up the hedg. and lay open the Vineyard of Christ unto the wilderness. For self-love is such a powerfull blinding thing, that it will make every man almost, especially of the worser fort, ap-

prove of that which is their Own.

2. If every man should be the sole Judge of his own, Profession, and fitness for Church Priviledges, then there could be no Communion of Saints: For all the most ignorant and impious persons, would intrude into our Communion; and it would be a Communion not only of actual, but of professed impious men. But the consequent is intollerable, as being contrary to an Article of our Belief, and a principal part of Christian practice.

3. If each man, were the only Judge of his own Profession, then there could be no exereise of Church Discipline, nor keeping, or casting out the wicked: But the consequent

is unsufferable: Therefore.

4. If each man be the only Judge of his own Profession, then the Church is an unguided, ungoverned Society: but the Consequent is falle; therefore so is the Antecedent.

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2. And now I prove that it belongeth to the Office of the Ministers to judge of, and approve, the Profession of such as expect admission, or the Priveledges of the Church.

1. If persons are not the sole Judges themselves, then it must belong to the Minister to judge: But the Antecedent is before proved: The Consequence is proved thus: It must belong either to the Paftours, or the Magistrate only, or the people only; or to all, or some of these conjunctly. Not to the Magistrate only: for 1. No man that I know of affirmeth it. 2. It is another mans office. Not to the people only: for I. None that I know of affirmeth this, They all include the Pastours. 2. As I said, it is made part of the Pastours office. If you say that it belongs to Magistrates, People, and Pastours jointly, then you include the Pastours: And I grant that in some fort it belongs to them, but in a different fort, as I shall tell you under the next Proposition.

2. It is to Ministers as such that the Keys of the Kingdom of Heaven are committed: but to approve of the Profession of such as are to be admitted into the Church, or to its Priviledges, is part of the exercise of the Key's of the Kingdom: therefore it is Ministered.

fters.

sters, to whom it belongeth thus to judge

and approve.

I have proved in another place, (and so have many others, more at large) that the Key's were not given to Peter, or to the Apostles, as to private men, for so they were not; nor as to a Church of private Chri-Rians; for so they were not, nor the reprefentatives of any such : nor yet as to Apofiles only; for then they should have belonged to none but themselves; the contrary whereof is certain: nor as to fixed Diocesan Bishops; for such they were not: and it's generally granted that the Key's belong also to Presbyters, either wholly, or the chief of them, and particularly, that in question: Nor yet were the Key's given them only as a Synod, or Presbyterie; for Peter Was not such: and this in question hath ever been exercised by such Ministers.

Arg. 3. The Rulers of the Church are the lawful Judges, or Approvers of the Profession of those that come into the Church, or demand the Priviledges of it: But it is the Ministers of Christ, that are the Rulers of the Church, as is exprest, 1 Thes. 12. Als 2. 28. Heb. 13. 7. & 17. 24. 1 Tim. 5. 17.

Therefore.

Arg.4. Those that are by Office the Stewards

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of the Mysteries of God, and Rulers over his bousbould, to give them meat in due season, which they must do as faithfull and wise servants, till their Lord cemeth; are the men that must judge of, and approve the qualifications of those that come under their Stemardship, Government, and Administration, of these Mysteries. But such are the Ministers of Christ, I Cor. 4. 1. Matth. 24. 45, 46, 47. Therefore.

Arg. 5. To whom it belongeth, to receive men at age into the Church; to refere by Absolution, them that fell off, and to Administer Christ's Ordinances to those that are within; to them doth it belong to try, judge, and approve of them, that are to be thus received, absolved, or that expect the Priviledges of the Church: But it belongeth to Christ's Ministers to receive men, absolve them, and administer the Ordinances to them: Therefore. The Antecedent is commonly granted, and plain in Scripture. The Consequence hath Reason so evident, as needs no confirmation.

Arg. 6. If all that enter into the Church, or that are reftored by Asolution, or are stated in a Right to Church Priviledges of the Adult, are therewithall engaged into a mutual, voluntary Relation to Christs Minifers.

Hers, then must their Profession be judged of & approved by Christs Ministers: but the Anrecedent is certain: Therefore to is the Consequent. The Antecedent is cleare, because 1. All that enter into the Universal Church, do enter under the hand of the Ministerie, and thereby acknowledg their Relation to them, and Authority to admit them. 2. Because all such do engage themselves to be Christs Disciples, and learn of him as their Master, not as coming down from Heaven, to teach them personally, but as teaching them by his Word, Spirit, and Ministers conjunctly, faying (Luke 10. 16) He that heareth you, beareth me, and be that despiseth you, despiseth me. 3. Because they all engage themfelves to take Christ for their King, who ruleth them by his Laws and Officers; and his Ministers are his Ruling Officers, I Tim. 5. 17. Heb. 12. 7. & 17. 24. 1 Thef. 5. 12. 4. Because they are all engaged to take Christ for the great High Priest of the Church, who hath appointed his Ministers, to officiate under him, in leading them in publike Worship of the Church; and in offering up the Praises of God, and bleffing the people, and praying for them and celeberating the Commemoration, and Representation of Christs Sacrifice on the Cross. 5. Because they that E 4 enter

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enter into a particular Church, where only the constant stated use of holy Ordinance and Priviledges, are to be had, (thou occasionally elswhere) do enter into a Retion to the Pastours of that particular Church; as members of their slock and Church; whom they must oversee, and watch over: all this is past controverse.

And then for the Consequent of the major Proposition (that therefore Ministers must approve of their Profession) I prove it thus. Ministers are naturally free-men, as well as others; and therefore no man can become a member of their charge, and put them upon fo great duty as the Relation doth require. against their wils, without their consent. and contrary to their Judgment, and Consciences. It is an exceeding great burden that lieth on us, and a great deal of work that is required of us, to each particular Soul: in our charge we must exbort, infruct. admonish, in feason, and out of season, publikly, and privately, and watch over, and covern them, visit them in sickness, comfort, ftrengthenthem, &c. O what a mountain lieth on me, and how should I bear it, if God did not support me? And if every man that will, shall make me more work, and put himself under my Care, Without my Conlent. fent, then I am so far from being a free-man, as all other are, that I am enflaved, and undone in flavery. For 1. They may oppress me when they will with Number; and so many may flock in to my charge, in despight of me, as mall nullifie the particular Church, and by the magnitude make it another thing, by making it uncapable of its ends, 2. And hereby they may force me to leave undone my duty, both to them and others, by oppresfing me with work: For when I have ten times more then I can teach and oversee, I must needs neglect them, all or most. 3. And they may abuse the Church; and me with the evil qualities, as well as the excessive quantity of members; and we shall be obliged to give that which is holy to dogs, and to use those as Church members, that are enemies to the Church; and to administrate Sacraments to any, that will have them, how unfit soever; and to prophane all Gods Ordinances, and turn them to a lie. 4. And by this means, the Church will be utterly ruined, and made a den of thieves, and a stic of swine: For besides that all the worst may at pleasure be members of it, all men that are faithfull, (or most at least) will runne away from the Ministry, and sooner turn Chimny-sweepers then Pastours. For what

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what man dare venture his Soul on so great a charge, for which he knows he must give an account, when he is certain to leave undone the work of his Office, in so great a measure, and when he knows he may be thus oppress in soul and body, and so undone by wicked men, when ever they please: yea, if they purposely do it to despight him.

Arg. 7. That which belongeth to all other Superiors, in voluntary Relations, is, not to be denied to Ministers in theirs: but a free consent, and Approbation of them, that they are related to, belongs to all other Superior, voluntary Relations: Therefore to us.

A Schoolmaster, is to Approve the capacity of his Schollars; and a Physician is to judge of the fitness of a person to be his patient, and his fitness for this or that medicine in particular. Not only a Master would take it ill, if he may not have the approbation of his own servants, but have as many, and as bad thrust on him, as shall please; but a husband would think it hard, if he might not have the approbation, and choice of his own wise, but that any might force him to take them that they please. And are the Pastour of Christs Church, the only slaves on

carth? How improbable a thing is this?

Arg. 8. That Relation which must be rationally, regularly, and faithfully managed, must be rationally, regularly, and freely entered (for otherwise we cannot so manage it) But the Relation of a Minister to each member of his charge must be thus managed:

Therefore

Arg. 9. It is plainly express in the Miniflers Commission, that he is to approve of the Profession of Disciples: therefore it belongeth to his Office, Matth. 28. 19. Go Disciple all Nations baptizing them teaching them to observe all things -Which plainly manifesteth; that it's they that must judge, when a man is made a Disciple, and when not, or else how can they either Baptize them as such, or teach them the Precepts of Christ as such? So when he giveth to his servants the Key's of the Kingdom, Matth. 18, &c. it sheweth that they are to judge who is to be admitted, and who not, as is aforesaid: or else he would never have fet them at the door, and made them the Porters, and Key bearers of his Church, to let men in.

Arg. 10. No man in the Administration of holy Ordinances, is ordinarily to renounce his own Reason and Conscience, and to act against

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against them. But thus it would be if we have not the approving of the Profession, or Qualification of those that we must administer them to: Therefore — He that is to Execute here is to judge: For 1. Else you will force Ministers to go against their Reason, and Conscience in all administrations. 2. You will deny them so much as fudicium Discretionis, which you allow to every Christian, much more Judicium Directionia, which belongeth to their Office. Every man must judge and understand what he doth, and why he doth it: you will not force the people to participate of Sacraments, against their Consciences. Why then should Ministers be forced to Give them against their Consciences? Administring is their work: and therefore they must know why they do it, and on what grounds: Else you will make them but like hangmen, or worse, if they must do Execution against their judgments, because it is anothers judgment. And whose judgment is it, that we must follow, when we go against our own?

Arg. 11. If it belong to Christ, to pass an open Approbation, of the Qualification of such as are to be admitted into his Church, or to his special Ordinances, or Church Priviledges, then doth it belong to the Ministers of Christ, as his instruments: But it doth belong to Christ. 1. For all that enter either into an Infant, or Adult Church-state. do joyn themselves into a neer Relation to Christ: And will Christ have men married to him, and made his children, and members, and servants, without his Approbation of them, or against his particular will? 2. All that thus come into the Church, or are restored, and claim Church-priviledges. do expect, and claime the Benefits of Christ, and the greatest benisits in the world. And shall any man have Christs great, and precious Benefits against his will, and without his Approbation? It may be you'l fay, that he hath already expressed his consent in the free Promise of the Gospel, to all believers. I Anfwer: He hath to to Believers: but he hath done it only to Believers, and he hath not said in the Gospel that you are a Believer.

Object. But it's sufficient, that my own

Conscience beare me witnes.

I Answer, It is so, as to all matters of Conscience, that are to be transacted only between God and you, as about your Justification, and Glorification.

Its before proved, that men are not here their own judges.

on, &c. (And yet in this case, Ministerial Absolution is a great means to help the

Peace

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Peace of your Consciences.) But where the Minister hath to do with you, by Administrations, and the Church hath to do with you in the way of Communion, there they must know what they do, and why, and must have some expression; of what you say your Conscience testifieth to you.

And the Consequence of the Major is plain, (that if it belongs thus to Christ to approve, then it belongs to his Ministers,) 1. Because he appointeth not personally on earth, nor useth, or approveth any other way, to fignific his own Approbation of you in particular, for a Church-strate, and Priviledges. 2. Because he hath expresly intrusted his Ministers with this Power, as to speak to men in Christs stead , 2 Cor. 5. 19. So to espouse them to Christ their husband, that we may present them a chast Virgin to Christ, 2 Cor. 11. 2. Yea, and hereupon they are to give up themselves to the Lord first, and to us by the will of God, 2 Cor. 8. 5. Christs Ministers are his Agents, or Embassadours, as to solicite men in his Name to be Reconciled to him; To to Approve them in his Name, and tell them that he is Reconciled to them. And therefore they are to deliver Himself, his Body, and Blood, in his Name to them in the Lords Supper; and to bind,

and

and loose in his Name; and whatsoever they loose on earth, (according to his Promise) shall be loosed in Heaven: So much of his work doth Christ by his Officers.

And even mens first Faith is a Believing the Preacher, and Christ by them, All 8.
12. They believed Philip preacking, &cc.

Arg. 12. To whomsoever the Labour belongeth, to them the Power of doing it belongeth: But it is to Ministers that the Labour of trying and judging of such Prosessions, and Qualifications, belongeth; Therefore it is to Ministers, that the power belongeth.

The Major is undoubted: for else we must be bound by God, to do that which we have no Power (or Authority) to do, and or thers must have Power to do it, and not be bound to it, which are both senseless. The

Minor I prove.

1. From the frequent Commands of Scripture, that lay this burden on the Ministers, but not Magistrates or People. (in the way that's now in Question) All the directions, and Canons which Paul giveth to Timothy, Titm, to the Elders of Ephelms, Acts 20. and other Pastours, together with the Exhortations to performance, and terrible charges given them to be faithfull, do show that

it's they that must do the work.

2. From common confent: all would have the honour and Power: but who besides the Pastours would have the work, and care, and severe Obligations to perform it? Will Magistrates, or all the people undertake it, to try, and judge of the Professions of every man that enters upon Adult Church-membership, or Priviledges, of such as are to be restored? They that will undertake this work must attend it, and give them elves wholly to it, and conferre with the persons, and do so much work as our people would be hardly brought to do (if they were able) It's unexperien. ced Rashness, and perversness, that makes them so jealous of the Ministers Power in such cases, and some of them to reproach us for it. Ah blind unthankful Souls ! Do you know what the Ministry and this Power is? It is a power to be the servants of all; a power to spend and be spent, even for the unthankfull. It's a Power to do the most toylome, and displeasing work to flesh and blood, one of them in the world; such as flesh calls a very drudgery. I profess unseignedly that it God had left it to my choice, and I should consult with slesh and blood, I had rather preach twice or thrice a week for nothing, and do no more, then to have this Power (a duty

of judging and governing this one Parish, though I had for it many hundred pounds a year. Nothing doth bring so much trouble upon us, as that Power which unthankfull persons scorn at. I had rather, if I might consult with flesh and blood, be advanced to the Power, of holding or driving plow for you, if not of sweeping your streets. (Though yet because of Gods interest, and the ends of the work, I count it the happi-. est life in the world.) And do you grudg us fuch a Power as this? Would you grude me the Power of threshing your corn? Or will you grudg a Physician the Power of judging of your disease, and the Remedy, to save your life? Or a School-master the Power of examining, and teaching your children? Do the work, and take the Power, if you are able, and can go through with it, and spare not.

Arg. 13. It is only the Ministers of Christ, that are Able and Capable to receive the Power, and do the work: and therefore it is they only that have Authority thereto.

Nothing but the Antecedent needs proofe. And that I prove by three feveral Enablements, which Ministers have, and others want. 1. Ministers only have ability of Mind, for the work of this tryal, and Ap-

F probation.

probation. Here I speak of them Ordinarily, and I have these grounds for it. 1. God hath commanded that the most knowing, able, faithfull, holy men, shall be destinated to this work, I Tim. 3. Tit. 1. &c. And therefore it is supposed that usually they are fuch, or else it's the shame of the Magistrate that should see to it. 2. It's they only that fet themselves apart to the work and study from their youth, for the accomplishments that are requisite, (unless bere and there one of other forts) And men are likelieft to be understanding in that, which they have all their daies set themselves to study. 3. We see by experience that they are the most able, unless it be (alas how few) here and there a godly fludious Gentleman, or other perfon: who are most of them too blame, that they become not Ministers. I think.

2. It is only the Ministers, who being separated to the Gospel and Work of God, do lay by all other business, and give themselves wholly to these things. Gentlemen, (much less all the people of the Church,) cannot lay by their callings to attend this business of trying, and judging of mens Professions as Ministers must do, if they will be saithfull. Should private members have so much Church governing work as some cut

out for them, and should they bear such a burden, as some would lay upon them, under the name of Power and Priviledges, it would undo them soul or body, or both: they would find time little enough for it in some places, if they all cast off their outward

callings.

And 3. The Passours only are capable, because of Unity. For should the People have this work, as some would have it, the multitude would hinder execution, and they would turn all to wrangling. 1. Such bodies move flowly. 2. Multitude with that divefity of parts and minds that is among them, would fet them by the eares; and the Church would be almost alway in a flame. If every man that is to make Profession of his Faith, on this or the like occasion, must be tryed and judged by all; some would approve, and others would disapprove and reject, in most or very many cases. Whereas the Paflours being single, or not many, and more experienced, and able, and vacant for a full enquiry, have less reason to be partiall injurious, or disagreed.

Arg. 14. The Practice of the Apossles, Evangelists, and the Pastours of Christ's Church in all Ages, doth put us quite out of doubt, that it is not only belonging to the

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Ministerill Office, to judge and approve of such Professions, but that it is a very great

part of that Office.

John Baptist received, and judged of the Profession of his Penitents, before he did baptize them. The twelve Apostles, Mat. 10.13, 14. Were to judge of the worthiness, or unworthiness, of those that they were to abide with, Mark 6. 11. Who were the Judges or Approvers of the Profession of the 3000 Converts, Acts. 2. 41. but the Apofiles that Baptized them, or judged them to be Baptized? Who elfe approved of all the believers that were added, Acts 5. 14. even multitudes both of men and women? They that Continued in the Apostles Dostrine and fellowship, (Acts 2. 42.) and under their Government, no doubt entered at first under their conduct. Philip was the Judge of the Eunuch's Profession, Acts 8.37, 38. Ananias was scrupulous of admitting Paul, but as God himselse Approved of him to Ananias (Acts 9. 13, 14, 15.) So Ananias alfo must ministerially approve him (verf. 17.) Who judged of Lidia's Profession, and the faglours, (Acts 16) but the Apostles, or other Ministers of Christ? What need we instance any more, when we all know, that no Convertentered at Age into the Church,

but

but under the band of some Minister of Christ, that did Baptize him, or appoint him to be Baptized.

Object. But this is not our Case, for we were Baptized in Infancy, and are in the

Church already.

Answ. You entred not into the number of Adult and more persect Members in your Infancy; nor did you make any personal Profession in your Insancy: That's yet to be done. Your Parents Profession will serve you no longer then your Insant state. These being not in the Gospel Church before, were at once Baptized, and entered thereby into the Number of the Adult members. So would we do if we converted those that were the seed of Heathens or Insidels. But though this be not your Case in respect of Baptism, and an Insant Church-state, yet this is your own Case in regard of personal Profession, and Adult Church-state.

If the Ministers of Christ in Scripture time, admitted none into an Adult Church-state, and to the Priviledges of such, but upon a Personal Profession, approved by the said Ministers, then mither must we do so now. But the Antecedent is past doubt: Therefore.

The Reasons of the Consequence is, be-F 3 cause

cause the Scripture is our Rule, and the Reasons of the Cases are the samo. If you fay with the Anabaptists, that I may as well argue from the Apostles example, for the Baptizing of the Aged: I Answer so I will, when the Case is the same: when they are converted from Infidelity, or are not born and baptized into the Gospel-Church before: The Apostles did not Baptize at Age, any person that was born of believing Parents in the Gospel-Church, after Baptism was instituted. As to them that say, that Anabap. Object. Mary was a Christian, and yet Christ was not Baptized till Anfw. full Age. I Answer, 1. That Mary was not a Baptized person: 2. That Baptism into the Name of Father, Sonne, and Holy Ghost, was not Instituted in Christs Infancy: How should he be Baptized in Infancy, when there was no such Ordinance of God in the world, as Gospel-Baptism, or Johns Baptism? If you think Baptism, and Profession, or Church-membership so inseparable, that we must not require such a Prosession, but in order to Baptism. 1. You speak without proof. 2. You speak even contrary to the experience of the Jewish Church: where in the wildernis, Circumcifion was separated from Profession,

and Church-membership, both of Infants, and Adult, the later being without the former. 3. If we may be Baptized in Infancy, without a Personal Profession, then they are separable: but the Antecedent is proved in due place. 4. No man denieth that I know of but that Personal Profession approved by the Ministers, is necessary in several Ca-ses, after Baptism. But all the examples of the Baptized Adult in the New Testament, will fully prove, that all men should enter into the state and number of Adult Churchmembers, upon a Personal Profession approved by the Ministers of Christ: for so did all in the Scripture terms, on Reasons common to them and us: and no man can put by the obligation of the example, by any pretence of an imparity of Reason, but what will be as firong to evacuate almost all Scripture example, and much of the commands. But as to the Baptizing persons at Age, we will do the same, when the persons are such, as the Apostles baptized: and that they baptized none others, was never yet proved; but more faid for the Affirmative.

And ever since the Apostles daies, it hath been the constant Practice of the Church, that the Profession, and claim of the Adult should be tried by the Ministers of Christ. 1. In Case of Insant Baptism, the Minister was to receive and approve the Parents Profession. 2. In Case of the Baptism of the Aged, they alwaies entred under the tryal, approbation, or hand of the Minister. 3. In Case of the Confirming of those at Age, that were Baptized in Insancy, it was alwaies done under the hand and judgment of the Minister. 4. In Case of Absolution of those that fell after either Insant, or Adult Baptism, it was alwaies upon a Profession approved by the Minister. To prove these things is vaine, it being the Subject of so many Canons, and so commonly known, both by Record and Practice.

Mr Herbert Thorndike, in his forcited Discourse of the Right of the Church, is full upon it, pag. 32. he saith, As the Power of Judging who is, and who is not thus Qualified, presupposes a Profession, so that an Instruction, obliging the obedience of them; which seek Remission of sames, by the Gospel, and therefore considertly assuring it to them, which conform themselves. In a word, because admitting to, and excluding from the Church, is, or ought to be, a just and lawfull presumption of admitting to, or excluding from Heaven, (N.B.) it is morally and legally the same act, that entitleth to Heaven,

and

and to the Church; that maketh an heir of Life Everlasting, and a Christian; because he that obeyeth the Church, in submitting to the Gospel, is as certainly a member of the Invisible, as of the Visible Church. You see here in his Judgment, both what kind of Profession it must be, and who is the Judge of it (of which he is more large.) And furely they that see Confirmation, and Penance, or Absolution, grown up to the reputation of proper Sacraments, and understandeth how they came to it, will never question whether the Universal Church, hath still taken the Pastours for the lawfull Judges, and Approvers of that Confession, and Profession, which in such Cases was requisite.

And that it was a Profession, both of saving Faith, and Repentance, that was expected by the Church; which the Pastours were to Judge of: I mentioned some plain testimonies of Antiquity. Apol. pag. 95. to

which I shall adde some more.

fustin Martyr, Apolog. 2. Expressing how Baptism was then admitted to the Adult, saith, As many as being persuaded, do believe these things to be true which we teach, and do promise to live according to them, they first learn, by prayer and fasting, to beg pardon of God, for their former sinnes, our selves also joyning

joyning our prayer and fasting: then they are brought to the water, and born againe, in the same way as we our selves were born againe. And of the Lords Supper he saith, This food we sail the Eucharist, to which no man is admitted, but he that believeth the truth of our Destrine, being washed in the Laver of Regegeneration, for Remission of sinne, and that so liveth as Christ bath taught.

Nazianzen. Ocat. 40. vol. 1. pag. 641. The force and faculty of Baptism, is nothing else, but a Covenant entered with God, for a second (or new) life, and amore pure course of living. And therefore that we should all exceedingly seare, and with all diligence keep our soules, lest we be found to have violated this Covenant. Basil's words, and many more to the like purpose, there recited I for-

beare.

And that a man baptized, is not so much as to be taken for a Christian, if by word or deed he nullifie that Prosession (much more when he never made a Personal Prosession, when he is at Age) the Ancients commonmonly agree. Some I cited before: Tertullian again saith, Apol. cap. 44. Speaking of the Jaylor, Nemo illie Christianus, nist plane tantum Christianus; ant se & alind, jam non Christianus.

Athena-

Athenagoras, in Legat. pro Christ. pag. 3. Nullus Christianus malus est nisi haut professioners simulaverit.

Damascene Orthodox. sid. lib. 4. cap. 11. pag. 303. Qui enim secundum traditionem Catholica Ecclesia credit, sed communicat

operibus Diabolo, infidelis est.

Salvian. de Gubern. lib. 4. in the begining: Nam cum bos sit bominis Christians sides, sideliter Christi mandata servare, sit absque dubio at nec sidem babeat qui insidelis est, nec Christum credat qui Christi mandata conculcat. As per hoc totum in id revolvitur, ut qui Christiani nominis opus non agit, Christianus non esse videatur. Nomen enim sine attuat que officio suo nibil est.

Cyprian, de dupl. Mart. Frustra miscetur catui Sanctorum, in Templo manusacto, si submotus est ab universo Corpore Mystico

Christi . -

August. de Baptis. cont. Donatift, lib. 4. cap. 2. Ad Ecclesiam non pertinent omnes qui sunt intent, sed qui sunt in ea piè viventes. Et cap. 4. In corpore unica columba, nec heretici, necimprobi nominantur.

See the like passages of the Ancient Schoolmen, cited by Davenant in Colos. 1. 18.

pag. 118.

And thus I have shewed you the Necessity

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of a Profession, and of what fort of Profession, and that the Passours of the Church are by Office appointed by Christ, to try, approve, and receive it.

Prop. 8. Though it belong to the Passours Office to judge of the Profession of such expersions, yet are they bound up by the Laws of Christ, what Profession to accept, and what to refuse: and if by breaking these Laws they shall dangerously, or grossy wrong the Church: it belonges that Magistrate to correct them, and to the people to admonish them, and disown their sinne.

TN summe, as is aforesaid, It is a credible Profession of true Christianity, which they must accept. And as that which seemeth not to be Understanding, and serious, and voluntary, and deliberate, is not credible; nor that which is Nullisted by Verbal, or Actual Contradiction; nor that which is made by one that hath forseited the credit of his word; so on the other side, a Credible mans Profession is his Title-condition, in the Judgment of the Church, or that Evidence of the Gondition that we must take up with: And if a man produce the Positive Evidence of

his

his Title, we must be able to disprove, and invalidate it, before we reject him: so that it is a Profession of true Christanity, which we cannot prove to be false, at least by a Violent Presumption, (as the Lawyers speak) which

we must accept.

By this it appears, 1. That a grofly ignorant person, that knoweth not the Essentials of Christianity, is not to be taken for a Profeffed Christian. For tryal of fuch, the Ordinance of Parliament, of October 20. 1645. doth give us satisfaction (recited in the form of Church Government, of March 29. 1648.) 2. Nor one that denieth any of the faid Essentials Heretically. 3. Nor one that speaketh Ludicrously, and jestingly. 4. Nor one that speaks in a Passion, not deliberatly. 5. Nor one that is manifestly forced and unwilling. 6. Nor one that faith and unsaith. 7. Nor one whose life doth prove his Profession to be incredible. 8. Nor one that hath perfidiously been a breaker of Covenant with God already, till his reformed life shall recover the credit of his word. So that with a Credible person, his bare Profession is Evidence fefore the Church of his Right; and we must prove him a Lyar, or false in his Profession, before we can reject him. But a man that hath been wicked, after open

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Covenanting with God, or Profession of Christianity, hath forseited his credit, and therefore must shew us a new life, as well as a verbal Profession, before he is to be reflored to his Priviledges. In the first case (with a Credible person) We must prove his Profession falfe, before we reject him: but in the second Case (with an incredible person) be must Evidence his Profession to be true, by probable Evidences, that shall make it credible. If I thought that the very light and law of Nature, joyned with the known General Rules of Scripture, did not put this past Controversie, with most judicious Chrisstians, I should stand to prove all this by parts.

But on the other side, it is hence manifest, 1. That the Passours of the Church, must refuse no man that hath the least degree of Grace, or makes a credible Profession of the least. 2. And that we must not require as a matter of Necessity, such ripe, or clear, and judicious expressions, from the ignorant, bashful, or such, as for want of use and good breeding, are unable to express their minds, as we may from others. If a man, or woman be unable in good sence to express their Faith, in the very Essentials, or to reveale the Grace of God within them: yet if upon

our Interrogations, and helping them, they can do it in any intelligible manner, so that we do but perceive that it is a found Profession in the Essentials, which they Meane, though they cannot handsomly utter it, we may not reject any such as these. 3. Note also, that defects in Knowledg must be indeed exceeding gross, where the person is willing to be taught, and Ruled by Christ, and use his means, and thus feems to Love God, and Holiness, before they will warrant us to reject them. Should the Judgments of such persons seem unacquainted with some sundamentals, about the Trinity, and the like mysteries, I should search them better, and I should plainly tell them presently of the truth, and if they received Information I should not reject a willing Soul. The very Apostles of Christ had the Sacrament adminifired to them by himself, when they did not understand and believe, the Death and Refurrection of Christ. I know that this will not warrant us to give such persons the Eucharist now; because that those great Truths were not then of such great Necessity, as after Christs Death and Resurrection they did become; as being not so fully revealed, nor the Actual belief of them fo peremptorily imposed. But yet it shews us this much, that

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that even in persons admitted to the Lords Supper, if there be but a Belief in God the Father, Sonne, and Holy Ghost, and the Points of Absolute Necessity, (though in rude and unperfect conception) and a Love to Christ, and a willingness to Learn of him, and obey him, a great deale of lamentable ignorance may be born with, in those that have wanted either Means of knowledg, and clear discoveries of the Truth, or natural ripeness of understanding to receive it. You see then that Pastours are not Arbitrary, nor meetly lest to their own wills.

Prop. 9. It is most evident that Ministers, Feople, and Magistrates, have each a Power of Judging; but different, as they have different works.

2. When the Question is, To whom the Sacraments, and other Ordinances, and Church-Relations, and Priviledges are to be Ministerially delivered as from Christ, and to whom not? Here the Ministers of Christ are the Judges. And so are they, when the Question is, Whom must we teach, direct, and perswade, and in Christs Name command the people to avoid, or to hold Com-

munion with? For those two are our own work in the Execution. And if either Magistrate people, or any other must be Judge, where Ministers must Execute and work; Then 1. We have not that common fudicium Discretionis to guide our own actions, which is allowed, and Necessary to every Christian. 2. Then the Rulers of the Church, are not only degraded, and made no Rulers, but are put into that slavery, and subjection to them, that are commanded to obey them, which no Pastour must desire the People, or any one of them to be in. For we must not deny them a Judgment of Discretion, about their own actions. 3. And by this course, Ministers that are the Eies of the Body, must not only be guided by other parts, but they must execute against their own Knowledg, and Conscience, when other men miss judge. 4. And if so, either God commandeth us to finne, when ever people, or Magistrates' bidus, (which none dare fay) or else it is no sinne, when it doth but get their Votes and so we may warrantably do what the Magiftrate bids us, (as Hobbs thinks) or what the people bids us, (as others as unreasonably think) As if it would be a sufficient excufe for me, to say, Lord I did what the Magistrate, or the Major Vote of the people

bid me, though it was that which thou forbidest. 5. If the people have no such Power over one another, then they have none over their Rulers or Guides: But they have none such over one another. Indeed in order to Unity, a Major Vote may (not effectually oblige) but occasion an obligation: But as to Government, let them new us if they can from Scripture, where the Major Vote of a Church hath the Government of the Lesser part, or that the Lesser may go against their own Judgment, and Conscience, meerly because the greater part requireth it. This Governing Vote, is as strange a thing to the Scripture as a Pope is. 6. Pastours, or General unfixed Ministers, may receive perfons into the Univer/al Church sometime, without receiving them into any particular Church: And what have any people there to do with the tryal, or Approbation of their Profession or Qualifications? One can lay no more claim to it then another. And fore all the world must not have the tryal of them. 7. What people did Philip advise with before he Baptized the Eunuch? Or who but Philip alone was judge of his Profession? What Voteapproved of the 3000 Converts, Atts 2. or of Paul, Acts 9. or of Lydia, or the Gaoler, Acts 16. or any other

other that ever were admitted by the Ministers of Christ in Scripture times. And what Magistrates were the Approvers for 300 years after Christ? No nor after. 8. If in this part of our Office we must obey men. against God (whether Magistrate or People) then in other parts: And so if the Vote of the Church, or Magistrate, forbid me to pray or preach against Pride, Covetous-ness or Drunkenness, I must obey them, that is . I must obey men besore God , and please men, and be no longer the Minister of Christ. 9. What can be more plainly contrary to Scripture, then for the people by a Major Vote, to Rule those whom God commandeth to obey, as their Rulers? Heb. 13. 7. & 17. 24. 1 Tim. 5. 17. 1 Thef. 5. 12. Alts 20. &c.

Object. Pastours have but a Ministerial

Ruling Power.

Answ. Who doubts of that? But is a Ministerial Rule no Rule? No man on earth hath more then a Ministerial Power: For all are under God, and the Redeemer. All Judges, Justices, and other Officers in the Commonwealth, have but a Ministerial Rule as Officers: But is that no Rule? Or shall the People therefore Rule these Rulers? We are Christs Ministers for the people: we are

G 2 their

theirs finally, but have our Power from Christ only Efficiently. If the People are the Rulers, who are the Ruled? It's a strange society, when the Ruling, and Ruled part is the same; where all the Body is a Head and an Eye. 10. If People or Magistrates will oblige the Ministers by their Power, whom they shall Baptize, Confirm, or Absolve, and what Profession they shall accept; then must the People and Magistrates undertake to Answer it before God, and to bear all the blam, and panishment, if we miscarry in obedience to them. And truly if they dare undertake this, we should gladly accept of the condition, with a thoufand thankes, if we could but be fure that God would give us leave, and thus acquit us, and accept of our service on these terms. O then how easy a thing were it to obey, rather then to Rule. So much for the Power of the Ministers in this (and other such like)

2. When the Question is, whether such a Professor be sit for our own Communion or not, and whether it be our duty to avoid him or not, then the People have a Judgment of Discretion: Not a Governing Judgment, as the Pastours have; but a Judgment that must be the Immediate Guide of their Actions.

Yet this is to be thus exercised: They are to look to Gods Word as the Rule, and to trust that with a Divine Faith: They are also to look at the Judgment and Directions of the Pastours, that are their authorized Guides; and to trust them as the Officers of Christ. For the Word is their Regulating Guide; the Pastours are their authorized Directing Guides; and their own Understandings are their Immediate Discerning Guides. So that they must not be wife in their own conceits, nor leane to their own Understanding, without the use of Scripture, and Ministery; but use their Understandings for the improvement of these. So that if they know not that the Postours of the Church do missead them, contrary to the Word of God, they cannot deny them obedience (For the command to obey them is unquestionable.) Or if they have not a grounded strong presumption, or probability of it, they may not suspend their obedience; but must leave the Pastours to the work of their Office, and trust them in it, and avoid those whom they reject, and hold communion with those whom they accept, and introduce, confirm, or restore. But in case they know that a Pastour leadeth them nto fiane, they are not to follow him: and G 3

if they have just ground for a strong suspicion of it, they must suspend, and consult with other Pastours, and get sull information: For Christian People are not to be Ruled as beafts, but as the Children of God; and must understand what they are required to do, and why, as being free Subjects, (though Subjects) in the Kingdom of Christ, and to be governed accordingly.

3. When the Question is, Whether Miniflers are to be punished for abusing their Power, Receiving or Rejecting men to the injurie of the Church, and contrary to the Word of God: here the Magistrate is the Judge. For as forcing, or punishing corporally is his work, so he must be the Judge, where he is the executioner, or else he should be forced to go against his own Judgment, and to be a meer servile executioner, which were to him an insufferable injury.

But here, 1. The Magistrate must not give the Minister a Law to Govern the Church by; (unless the determination of circumstantial appendants) but must see that we Govern it according to the Word of God, our only and sufficient Rule. 2. And he must not be over busy, nor unnecessarily intermeddle in the works of another Office, nor be too

confident of his own Understanding in the

matte's

matters of the Pattours work, as if he knew better then they. 3. But he must correct or cast out those Ministers that will not obey the Word of God; Punishing us for breaking the old Rule, and not making new Rules for us, is their work, so be it, he can procure a better supply; 4. In this case, if the Magiftrates Judgment be right, he doth his duty, and Ministers must obey him: If he erre, he may be guilty of perfecution, in hindering good, under pretence of punishing evil. his errour tend not to the destruction, or great and certain hurt of the Church; the Ministers whom he casteth out, are bound to obey him, and give place to others, and bestow their labours, in some other Country, or in some other kind at home: But if his errour lead him to destructive persecution. we must Passively submit, but not Actively, or Negatively obey him, but must preach as long as we are able, and do our duty, till by prison, or death he stop us in the exercise.

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Prop. 10 To this Ministerial Approbation of the Profession, and Qualification of the expectant, there is to be adjounced a Ministerial Investiture, or Delivery of the Benefit expected.

His is the proper work of the Ministers 1. of Chrift. He that is Himself in the Heavenly Glory, bath left his Spirit within to draw men to him, and his Ministers without, to Deliver up the Counter-covenant on his part, in his Name, and to espouse them to Christ, and to Accept them in his Name, and stead. And this Investiture is one of the principal parts of the Nature and use of Sacraments, which all have not fully Considered of. The Papists tell us of seven Sacraments, Baptism, Confirmation, Pennance, Orders, the Eucharift, Matrimony, and Extream Unction. Calvin flicks not to yield them three. The name Sacrament being not in Scripture, but of meer Ecclesiastikuse, and being a word that will stretch, I distinguish between three forts of Sacra-1. For any Divine Institution which notably fignifieth Spiritual Grace: And fo (though I think Extream Unction none, as being now no duty, yet) I doubt not but

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there's more then seaven. 2. For any solemn Investiture of a person by Ministerial Delivery, in a state of Church priviledges, or some special Gospel-mercy. And so I grant that there are five Sacraments: Baptism, Confirmation, Absolution, the Lords Supper, and Odination. As a man that delivereth Possession of a house, doth deliver the Key to him that enters; and as we are Invested in the Possession of land, by the delivery of a twig and turfe; and as Ministers were wont to be invested, or have Induction into the Churches by giving them the Books, and the Bell-ropes; and as women were wont to be married with a ring, and as a Prince doth Knight a man by a fword: fo Christ by his Ministers doth first by Baptism Invest us in our Church-state, and Infant-priviledges: and by Confirmation; confirm us in our Church-state, and Invest us with a Right to the Priviledges of the Adult : and by Absolution reinvest us in the Priviledges that we had forfeited: and by the Lords Supper Deliver to us Christ and his Benefits, for our ordinary nourishment, and growth in Grace: and by Ordination he Investeth the pardon ordained with Ministerial Power. 3. But taking the word Sacrament in that firictest sence, as our Divines define a Sacrament,

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as it is an outward figne of Christs Institution, for the obsignation of the sull Covenant of Grace, betwixt him and the Covenanter, and a delivery, Representation, and Investiture of the Grace, or Benefits of that Covenant; thus we have only two Sacraments, Baptism, and the Lords Supper. But truly I would not quarrel with them for the meer name, as to the five which I mentioned.

of the states to have being a series

Prop. 11.

Prop. 11. The Solemn Ministerial Investiture of Professours, into the Right of the Church priviledges of the Adult, is either I. Of the unbaptized, who are now first entered. 2. Or of the Baptized in Infancy, that never proved ungodly, nor violated that first Covenant. 3. Or of those Baptized, whether in Infancy or at Age, that bave fince Proved wicked, and broke that Covenant. The first of these Investitures is. to be by Baptism; the second by Confirmation; and the third by Absolution. So that the solemn Investiture that I am pleading for, is by Confirmation to one fort (that never proved ungodly fince their Baptism) and by Absolution to the other fort that broke their Covenant.

He Baptism of the Adult, we have not I now to do with. Of those that are Bap. tized in Infancy, some do betimes receive the secret seeds of Grace, which by the bleffing of a holy education, (and some among the prophane) is stirring within them, according to their capacity, and working them to God by actual defires, and working them from all known finne, and entertaining further Grace, and turning them into actual acquaing

acquaintance with Christ, as soone as they arrive at full natural capacity: so that they never were Actual ungodly persons. To these their Investiture in the state of Adultmembers upon their personal Approved Profession, is a Consistent of the mutuall Covenant that it findeth them under, and of them in that Covenant.

But there are others (I doubt the most) that since their infant Baptism, have proved Actual wicked ungodly persons; if not openly flagitious and scandalous, yet at least, unacquainted with any special fanctifying work, till after they attain to the full years

De Exhomologef. vide Albespin. in Tertul. de Pænit. c. 10.pag.297. dr Observ. passim. of discretion. These break their Covenant made with God in Baptism, in which they were devoted to him, and engaged to live to him, forsaking the sless, the world, and the Devil. And therefore these

must come in as Penitents (even as if they had proved wicked after an Adult Baptism, they must do:) and therefore it is first an Absolution which they must receive: not only a Particular Absolution from an Ast of baynous sinne (which afterwards may be renewed upon particular penitence) but a General Absolution from a state of sinne. Yet

this doth consequently participate of the Nature of the former, and hath a Confirmation in it, or with it: Not a Confirmation in the wicked state that such have lived in but a Renewal, and folemn Confirming of the Covenant, between God and them, which in Baptism was made, So that to such it is as an Absolution and Confirmation Conjunct.

Prop. 12. This solemn Investiture on personal Profession, being thus proved the Ordinance of God, for the solomn renewing of the Covenant of Grace, between God and the Adult Covenanter, it must needs fellow, that it is a corroborating Ordinance, and that corroborating Grace is to be expe-Eted in it from God, by all that come to it in sincerity of heart: And so it hath the name of Confirmation upon that account also.

THe Papists quarrel with us, and curse us I in the Counsel of Trent, for denying their Ends of Confirmation, and making it another thing. But they fasty describe our Opinion: We do not take it to be a meer Catechifing, or receiving the Catechized to the Lords Supper, or to a higher form: But we take it to be the Approbation of the perfonal

fonal Profession of them that claime a Title to the Church-state, and Priviledg of the Adult, and an Investing them folemnly therein, upon the solemn Renewal (and personal Adult enterance) into Covenant with God. Now in this Renewed Covenant, as they give up themselves to Christ afresh, and personally engage themselves to him, and renounce his enemies, owning their Infant Baptism, when this was done by others in their names, so God is ready on his part to bless his own Ordinance, with the Collation of that Corroborating Grace. which the Nature of the Renewed Covenant doth import. Otherwise God should appoint us means in vain, and fail them in the Use of his own Ordinances, that use them as he hath appointed: which is not to be imagined: Though the unfound hypocritical Receivers may miss of this bleshing; and though as the Degrees of Coroborating Grace, God is free to give it out as he pleafeth. So that the Papilts Mall have no cause to fay, that we needlesly, or erroneously do deny either the name of Confirmation, or the true use and ends of it, or the notional Title of a Sacrament to it in a larger (yet not the largest) sence. We affect not to fly further from them, then we needs must; much

much less to fly from the Ancient Practice of the Universal Church: But we must crave their pardon, if we introduce not their Anointing (though ancient) seeing when it was used of old but as an Indisserent Ceremonie, they have turned it now into a proper, necessary Sacramental signe: And if we give not the Consirmed a boxe on the eare, as they do for a holy signe, or abuse it not as they in many respects, and turne it not into a meer deceiving formality, in this also we must needs crave their pardon. So much of the Name, and Ends of Consirmation.

Prop. 13. Ministerial Imposition of hands in Confirmation, and the fore described fort of Absolution, is a lawfull, and convenient Ceremony, and ordinarily to be used, as it hath been of old by the Universall Church. But yet it is not of such Necessity, but that we must dispense in this Ceremony with scrupulous Consciences, that cannot be satisfied to submit to it.

Thus must we take heed of both extreams:
either of rejecting a Ceremony, that
hath so much to be said for it as this hath:
or of making it more Necessary then it is, to
the

the wrong of tender Consciences, that are not yet ripe enough, to be well informed of it, and to Answer the Objections that they have heard against it; nor yet to receive your Answers.

Grorius Epift. 154. p. 377, 378. Mibi legendo compertum est manuum impositionem caremeniam fuisse Judaicam, usurpatam, non Lege ulla Divina, sed moribus, ubicunque precandi pro aliquo causa quadam emersevat. Tunc enim 7udei orabant ut sic Dei efficacia esset super illum, sicut manus, efficaciæ (ymbolum, ei imponebantur. Hunc quemque morem ut Synagoga pleraque secutus est Christus, sive pueris benedicendum fuit, sive agrotis adhibenda sanatio addita, ut semper bonos Patri haberetur, prece. Endem more non ex ullo pracepto, est quod Apostoli manus imposuere

I. For the first Part of the Proposition. I think it may suffice, I. That Imposition of hands was used in Scripture times. and so used, as may invite us to imitation, but not deter us from it at all. 2. And that it hath been fince of ordinary use in the Universal Church, in this very case, so that no other Original of it can be found, but Apostolical; yea we' have exceeding probable evidence, that the use of it was never interrupted, from the daies of the Apostles, down to the Reformation. 3. Nor is it laid afide in many of the Reformed Churches. So that you will find that as it's casie toprove Lawf 22/2

ful, so it's more likely to be a Divine Institution, Necessary Necessitate pracepti, then to be unlawfull.

iis, quibus ignoto ante hac jure dona conDicua Sancti Spiritus precando conferebant: quod Presbyteri eundem ritum adhibuere non tantum in alle-

gendu presbiteris, puta Timotheo, 1 Tim. 4. 15. Sed dy ipsis Apostolus, ubi novi aliquid opis aggrederentur, Act. 13. 2. Ita ut si quotiens manus imponitur toties Sacramentum est, jam nulla futura sit ad precandum pro aliquo occasio, que non eo nomine veniat; quod nec vocis Orizo, nec veterum in ea usus repudiat. Et ex una hâc non imperata sed usità Judan Christianisque caremonia, exstitere illa, que dicuntur Sacramenta confirmationis, Ordinationis, Panitentia, extrema unclionis immo do Matrimonii.

I shall purposely say the less of it, because Mr Hanner hath said so much already as to the Judgment of the Ancients; and my intent is to pretermit that part (or fay less to it) which he hath performed. But that it is Lawfull and fit, if not of some Necessity, I shall prove by the forementioned Evidence.

I. Imposition of hands, is allowed in Scripture, to be used Generally by Spiritual Superiours, to signific their will and Desire, that the Bleffing may fall on the Inferiour, or the Gift, or Power be conferred on him, for which they have a sall to mediate: So that it is not

confined

confined to any particular Bleffing, Power, or Ordinance. And therefore if there had been no example of the use of it, in this particular case (of Confirmation, or Absolution) yet hence it is proved to be Lawfull and Meet, because it hath this General use and allowance. The Lifting up of Hands in Prayer was used to signific from whom and whence they did expect the bleffing; even from our Fasher which is in Heaven: And the Laying of Hands on the Head of the person in or after Prayer, was used as an Applicatory figne, to signifie the Terminus ad quem of the blesfing defired, or the Person, on whom they would have it bestowed. And as you will not cast away the use of Lifting up of Hands. though it be for such mercies, as you read no Scripture instance, that Hands were lift up for: because the General warrant is sufficient: fo you have as little reason, to scruple or cast away the Laying on of Hands, though in such, cases as you read not that the fign was used for in Scripture; because the unlimited Gene. ralluse, is sufficient warrant, in such particular cases. God shewed that the very ou:ward signe of Lifting up of the hands, was not to be despised, when Ameleck had the better when Moses hands fell down, though but through weakness, so that Aaron and

Hur-were fain to underset them, Exod. 17. And I think we have no reason to contemn the Laying on of hands, which in Grounds and Nature is so neer kin to the other. And as spreading forth the hands, doth not ceale to be good and meet, for all that God hath said he will not heare them, that spread forth hands that are full of blood, Ifa. 1.15. So the Laying on of bands doth not cease to be good and meet, though in some cases the Bleffing do not follow it. Still we must every where Lift up boly bands in Prayer, without wrath and doubting, 1 Tim. 2.8. Though the figne be not of absolute Necessity in every Prayer, yet it is very meet, and too much neglected among us. And so I may say, of the other. When Solomon prayed in the Temple be foread forth his hands towards Heaven, I King. 8. 22. And so he supposed all would do, that lookt to be heard by the God of Heaven, when verf. 38. he prayeth for the people thus: What Prayer and Supplication soever be made by any man, or by all thy People Israel, which shall know every man the plague of bis own heart (that was their Prayer-Book) and spread forth his hands towards this house, then heare thou in Heaven thy dwelling place, and forgive, and doe, &c. see vers. 54 2 Chron. 6. 12, 13. We must life up our Hearts with

our Hands to God in the Heavens, Lam. 3. 41. We must prepare our hearts, and stretch out our hands towards him, Job 11. 13. Praying to a strange God, is signified by stretching out the hand to him, Plal. 44. 20. Even in Praises the people were to Life up their hands towards Heaven, Neh. 8. 6. Yea and in Blessing, Lifting up the Hands was used to signific whence the Blessing came, Luke 24. 50. Now this being so commonly applied, the other that is so neer a kin to it, may without scruple be used in any case that that falls under the foredescribed General case. Indeed every man must lift up bands, because every man must pray, and it is an engagment, that those hands that are lifted up to God, be not used in wicked works:) but Laying on of hands is ordinarily the Act of a Superiour, to the Ends abovefaid.

Thus facob, Gen. 48. 14, 15. Laid bis hands on the sonnes of foseph in bleffing them. Moses laid his hands on fosena, when he ordained him his successour, Num. 27. 18, 23. & Dent. 34. 9. Yea even in the execution of evil they laid on hands, as an Applicatory signe, as in Sacrificing; as if they should say, Not on me, but on this substitute let the Evil of punishment be. See Levit. 16. 21, 22. Exod. 29. 10, 15. Lev. 4. 15. & 8. 14, 22. Numb. 8.

Numb. 8. 12. Yea in putting a Blasphemer and Curser to death, they first laid their hands on his head, as an Applicatory figne, in whom the fault was, and to whom the punishment did belong, Lev. 24 14. In the Ordination, or Confectation of the Levites, the people were to lay their hards on them, Numb 8. 10. Not to give them Authority, but to Consecrate and give them up to God. By Laying on of the hands, as an Applicatory figne, did Christ and his Disciples heale diseases, &c. Mark 5. 23. Where note, that the Ruler of the Synagogue Fairus, took this as an ordinary signe of conferring blessings from a Superiour, and therefore he mentioneth it with the bleffing defired, Mark 6. 5. & 8. 23, 25. Luke 13. 13. & 4. 40. So you may see also the Apossles did; yea, and other believers, as the promise runs, Mark 16. 18. Alls 28. 8. Also by laying on of hands, as an Applicatory signe, they invested the seaven Deacons in their Office, Alls 6. 6. And the Prophets, and Teachers in the Church of Antisch, separated Barnabas and Paul, to the work that God appointed them, Alts 13. 2, 3. By Fasting, and Prayer, and Imposition of hands. And Timothy received his Ministerial Gift, by the Laying on of Pauls hands, and the hands of the Preshitery,

1 Tim 4. 14. and 2 Tim. 1 6. If this last Text be understood of the Ministerial Ordination and Gift, swhich I rather think is meant of the Apostolical Imposition of hands, after Baptism, for giving of the Holy Ghoft. So that this figne was used upon several occasions, and is not at all forbidden in this, directly, nor indirectly, and therefore it is undoubtedly lawful: seing that without doubt the less is blessed of the greater, Heb. 7. 7. and the Duty and Power of the Pastour to Bless the person in this case is unquestiona. ble, and this Imposition of hands is an allowed figne in Bleffing, as Lifting up the hands is, in Traying; here is Scripture enough to prove it Lawful, and very meet.

2. But let us enquire yet whether the Scripture lay not objection on us, 167, 168.

2. But let us enquire yet whether the Scripture lay not objection on us, to use this Ceremony, in Confirmation. To which end let

these several things be well considered.

1. We find in Scripture a Bleffing of C urch members, with Laying on of hands.

2. We find in Scripture, that the Hely Ghost is in a Special manner promised to Believers, ever and above that measure of the Spirit, which caused them to believe.

3. We find that Prayer with Laying on of hands, was the own and

ontward means to be used by Christs Minifters, for the procuring of this blessing. 4. We find that thus was a fixed Ordinance to the Church, and not a temporary thing: Layall this together, and you will see as much as my Proposition doth affirm. Let's try the

proof of it.

I. Though the proof of the first be not Necessary to the main point, yet it somewhat strengtheneth the cause, Mark 10. 16. Christ took the Children up in his armes, put his hands upon them, and blessed them so, Math. 19. 15. This is not I confess a Confirmation upon personal Profession, which I am now pleading for: But this is a Benediction by laying on of hands: And the subjects of it were such Children as were Members at least of the Jewish Church, being before Circumcized.

II. But to come never the matter; let us enquire what this Gift of the Holy Ghost was, that is promised to Believers. What-soever the Petagians say, the Scrip ure assure that Faith and Repentance which go before Baptism in the Adult, are the gifts of the Holy Ghost: and yet for all that the Holy Ghost is to be given asterward. And though very often this after gift is manifested by Tongues, and Prophesse, and Miracles,

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vet that is not all that's meant in the promise of the Holy Ghost. Gad hath not tyed Himfelf by that promife to any one fort of those extraordinary Gifts, no nor constantly to give any of them: But he hath promised in General to give Believers the Spirit: and therefore there is some other standing gift, for which the Spirit is promifed to all such. And indeed the Spirit promised is One, though the gifts are many; and the many forts of gifts make not many Spirits. If any man therefore shall ask, whether by the Promised Spirit be meant Sanctification, or Miracles, or Prophesie, &c.I Answer with Paul, There are diversities of Gifts, but the same Spirit, as there are differences of administrations, but the same Lord, and diversities of operations, but the same God, I Cor. 12. 4,5,6. It is therefore no wifer a question to ask, whether by the Spirit be meant this gift, or that, when it is only the Spirit in General that is promised, then to ask, whether by the Lord be meant this or that administration; and whether by God be meant this or that operation. To one is given the word of Wisdom by the Spirit, and to another the word of Knowledg, by the same Spirit, to another Faith by the same Spirit, &c. verf 8, 9, 10. Now I confels if any man can prove that this promife of the Spirit to the faithfull, is meant only of the extraordinary gift of Miracles, then he would weaken the Argument that I am about. But I prove that contrary, I Cor. 12. 12, 13. It is the gift of the Spirit, by which we are One body, which is called Christs, by which we are all baptized into this one body; and such members as have a lively fellow feeling of each others state, vers. 26. 27. Yea such as giveth to the Elect, the excellent, durable grace of Charity, vers. 31. and Chap. 13.

Gal. 4. 6. And because ye are Sonnes, God hathsent forth the Spirit of his Sonne into your hearts, crying Abba, Father. Note here, that it is not only the gift of Miraeles, but the Spirit of Adoption that is here mentioned; and that it's given to Believers, because they are Sonnes. And all the first part of Rom. 8. to vers. 29. doth shew, that it is the Spirit of Adoption, Supplication, and that by which we mortiste the sless, that is given to Be-

lievers.

2 Cor. 1:21, 22 Now he which stablisheth ms with you in Christ, and hath anointed us, is God who hath also sealed us, and given the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts. It is not the common gifts of the Spirit only that are here spoken of, nor is it the first gift of Faith,

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but it is Confirmation, or inward establishment in Christ, and that Spirit, which is the Fathers Sealupon us, and the earnest of the Inheritance. I believe not that it is outward Anointing, or sealing with the signe of the Cross, that is here mentioned, as many Papists dreame; but inward unction, seal, earnest, and confirmation by the Spirit, are here exprest. So 2 Cor. 5.5. Zach. 12. 10. It is the Spirit of Grace and Supplication that is promised to the Church. And see the pattern in Christ our head, on whom after Baptism the Spirit descended, and to whom it is promised. Matth. 12 18.

Ephel. 1. 13, 14. In whom also after yee believed, yee were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise, which is the earnest of our Inheritance. Here it's evident that it's such a gift of the Spirit, which is an Earnest of Heaven that is given to men, after they be-

lieve.

Joh. 7. 39. For the Holy Ghoss was not yet given them because that felus was not yet Gloristed. Yet the Apostles had Saving Faith then. And that it is not meant only of the Apostles extraordinary gifts of Miracles, the foregoeing words shew: He that believeth on me, out of his belly shall flow living waters: but this he spake of the Spirit, which they

that believe on him should receive.

By all this it is evident, that there was an Eminent gift of the Holy Ghost promised to them that had already the grace of Faith, and Repentance, and Love to Christ, wrought in them by the Holy Ghoft; and that though this Eminent Gift, did very much confift in gifts of Languages, Prophesie, and mighty works for the Confirmation of Christs Doctrine which was then to be planted in the world: yet was it not only in those gifts; but as some had only those common (though extraordinary) gifts, for the good of the Church; fo some had an Eminent addition of Special Gifts, to seal them up to the day of Redemption, and be the earnest of the Inheritance, to the faving of the Soul. If you ask, Wherein these special Eminent Gifts of the Holy Ghost do consist, I Answer: I. In a clearer knowledg of Christ, and the My-fteries of the Gospel; not an uneffectual, but a powerful, affecting, practical Knowledge. 2. In a fuller measure of Love, agreeable to this Knowledg. 3. In Joy and Peace, and sweet Consolation. 4. In esta-

resolution for Christ, and everlassing Life.

For the understanding of which we must know, that as the Doctrine is the Means of

blishment, and corroboration, and firmer

conveying the Spirit, fo the Spirit given is answerable to the Doctrine, and Adminifration that men are under. It's a very great question whether Adam in Innocency had the Spirit or not? But as the Administration according to the meer, Light, and Law of Nature, is eminently in Scripture attributed to the Father, so Adam certainly may be well faid to have had the Spirit of the Father, to enable him with gifts that were answerable to the Law that he was under, and the flate that he was in: But we cannot fitly fay that he had that which the Scripture calleth the Spirit of the Sonne, as not being under the Administration of the Sonne. But after the Promise till the coming of Christ, as the Administration was mixt of Law and Promise, Nature and Grace, as the dawning of the day before Sunne rifing doth partake of darkness and of Light, so the Spirit that was then given, was answerable to the Administration and Doctrine. And therefore as there was somewhat of the Gospel in those times, though yet God hath not thought it meet to callit (at least usually) by that name, but rather by the name of the Promiser, and Prophecies of Christ; so there was somewhat of the Spirit of Christ, though it be not usually so called, but when it appeared in some eminent Servants of Christ, as the Prophets were, in whom the Spirit of Christ is faid to have been, 1 Pet. 1. 11. Now as it was part of that work ascribed to the Father, to send and give the Sonne, and to Give men to the Sonne; so commonly those Gifts are ascribed to Him which are cotained in these expressions, and are the accomplishment of this work: And that not only in the old Testament, but in the New: and therefore it is called the Giving and the Drawing of the Father, by which we are brought to Believe in the Sonne: though yet the Grace of Faith is a special Saving Grace, and not common to the wicked, as the Papills dreame, because they find an uneffectual Assent to be common.

But now, as Christ at his coming doth bring to the world a clearer Light, and suler Revelation of Himself, and the mysteries of Redemption, and bring Life and Immortality to Light in the Gospel; and as the rising Sunne, dispelleth the remnants of Legal darkness, and his Doctrine is sully called The Gospel, the Testament of Jesus Christ, so answerably he doth by, and with this Doctrine, give out such a measure of the Spirit, to the Church; as is Eminently called the Spirit of Jesus Christ. Which carryeth us higher

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higher then the first Grace of Faith and Repentance, to those fuller degrees which were not ordinary, no not to the Godly in the time of the Law. And as this Spirit of Christ did extrinsecally shine in the Glory of tongues and wonderous works, while those were necessary to the Church, and Christs service; so both then, and ever after it doth work (but in various degrees) for the Sanctifying of believers, and conforming their hearts and lives to Christ; in his humiliation, patience, self-denial, meekness, contempt of the world, obedience, &c. till at last we be conformed to him in his Glory.

III. I have cleared the second point,

III. I have cleared the second point, (that there is an Eminent Gift of the Holy Ghost to be expected after our first Believing, even such as ceased not with Miracles: I now come to the third point, which is, That Ministerial Prayer with Laying on of bands, was the Scripture- way for the giving of this

Eminent gift of the Spirit.

For the understanding of this, observe these things: 1. How Sacraments, and Investing signes, conferre Grace. 2. How the Spirit is given in Biptisme. 3. How far God hath, as it were, tyed himself to Ordinances for conferring Grace. 4. What proof the Scripture yields us of the Proposi-

means of Reformation and Reconciliation. 111

tion. 5 What aptitude there is in Ministerial Confirmation, for the attainment of these ends.

1. We find in Scripture, that Sacraments are not appointed (nor to be used, according to the intent of the instituter) for the conferring of that Grace which men have not in any degree already: but they are, I. Partly a Solemn Investiture in that which before we had a Fundamental Right to: as the Listing of a Souldiour, or the solemnization of Marriage after a firm contract; the Crowning of a King; the delivering possession by a Key, a twig, or turf; the Knighting a man by a sword, &c. This is as to Relative benefits, and Right to Phycal benefits. 2. And withal they are by actual excitation of Grace, to Increase the Inherent Grace received, and fo to give us more. All this is evident in Baptism it self, where we are to receive both Remission of sinnes, with right to Everlasting Life, and also an increase of Grace in the Adult : And yet no man at age, is to come to Baptilm (to require it) that is not a Penitent Believer already, and consequently that hath not the beginning of special Saving Grace, and somewhat of Christ, and the Holy Ghost; and title to forgiveness, and Everlasting Life. For he is under the promise

promise that whoesoever believeth, shall not perist, but have Everlasting Life: and a Papist will grant, that the Voium Baptismi may ferve to his Salvation, if he die without it. And the case of Infants is the same, as to these Mercies which are Necessary to their state of life. Their Parents must be Believers. before they Dedicate them to God, and confequently the Child hath the Covenant right before it is sealed. And it is ridiculous in the Papists to damn all Infants, for want of Baptism, and not the Aged; and to make the Votum to serve for the Parent, and yet not for his Child, when yet the Parents Faith must serve to prove his Title to Baptism it felf. But to leave these Corrupters, and Innovatours; we see now what is to be expected by Confirmation: Not that men that have no fignes of Corroborating Grace, should come thither first to receive it; but that such as appear Initially Resolved, Confirmed, and Corroborated, may be (though not by a full and proper Sacrament, yet) Ministerially; 1. Invested into the state of the Consirmed, and their Priviledges, which is a higher form in the Schoole of Christ. 2. And may receive yet further Confirmation, and Corroboration by Gods Approbation, and Ordinance.

2. But

2. But batis not Baptism done all this already , Seeing we are Baptized into the Name of the Holy Ghoft? This is our second Point to be resolved. I Answer, It is a great errour to think that Adult Persons that have nothing of the Holy Ghost, may demand Baptism, and that Baptism doth not give the Holy Ghost: But yet it's one thing to give the Holy Ghost in Relation, and Fundamental Right, and another thing to give the Graces of the Spirit; and it's one thing to seale and increase the Initial, Special Grace of the Spirit, and another thing to Invest in a stablishing degree: And so it is evident that Baptism, as such is appointed but for the ewo first: That is, 1. As we must have some Faith and Repentance, before a person at age may come to Baptism, and so must have Fundamental Right by promise, to Christ, and pardon, and life, so this is fealed in Baptism, and we are solemnly Invested in it, and our Grace excited for increase: But it is not requifite that a man have a further degree of -Grace before he come. 2. In Baptism, it is our very Relation to God, as our Father and God, to Christ as our Saviour, and to the Holy Ghost as our Sanctifier, that is fealed to us, and we are Invested with: which is the Foundation of all that afterward

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from the Spirit is given us. As in Marriage, the persons in Relation, are given to each other for Marriage ends; So in Baptism, God the Father, Sonne, and Holy Ghost, one God in three persons, are solemnly given to us in Relation to themselves, for Christian, Baptismal Ends. But as after Marriage, the man takes home his wife, and delivereth her a possession of his house first, and after admits her to bed and board, according to his Covenant, fo Christ doth after Baptism, take home the Christian into his Church, and admit him to the several Priviledges of it, in the season, and manner as he feeth meet. So that as all the good that we do after Baptism, is but the fulfilling of our Baptismal Covenant, and yet we did not the good when we Covenanted to do it: So all the after-Mercies, that God giveth us by promise (at least) on his part, are but the fulfilling, or fruits of his Baptismal Covenant; and that he did not give them in our Baptism. So that Confirmation is no full, and proper Gospel Sacrament as Baptism is, but a par-ticular subsequent Investiture, in some of the fruits of Baptism it self, in the season of them.

3 But have We any certainty, that this Ordinance shall prove effectually confirming to

m ? If not it will be but an idle, empty Geremony. This is our third Question: To which I Answer: 1. Ordinances are Duties, which we must use, and in which we must wait on God for his bleffing, if we will have it : and therefore in the way of Duty, we must be found. 2. What if you have not a certainty that your Prayer shall be granted, will you not therefore pray? Or if you are not certain that a Sermon shall profit you, will you not hear it? Or that Reading shall profit you, will you not read? Or that the Lords Supper shall increase your Grace; will you not use it? 3. But I may say more: If you come prepared, you may be sure of a Blessing in some degree: As it is not every one that Prayeth, and heareth, and Receiveth the Lords Supper, that shall certainly have the bleffing, but the prepared Soul that is the subject of the promise, which is annexed to that Ordinance; so it is not every one, that: is externally Confirmed by Prayer, and Imposition of lands, that shall be sure of the Blessing, but the Soul that is prepared, as aforedescribed. 4. But yet the several Degrees of Bleffing, God hath kept in his own hand, and not affixed them by promise to any person, in any Ordinance: He may bless the Word, Prayer, the Lords Supper, &c.

to one true Christian more then to another, and yet perform his promise to them all: and so he may this outward Confirmation.

3. But what proofe is there in Scripture of (nch an Ordinance, or Practice? That's our fourth Question: To which I Answer, I. For the main Point in question, it's already proved, beyond all Controversie, viz. the Necessity of a Personal Profession, and Covenant, before men be admitted to the Church-priviledges of the Adult, and that it belongeth to the Office of Christ's Ministers to judge of, and approve this Profession, &c. It is none of this that we have now to prove, but only the Manner of Admission hereupon, whether it be to be done by Prayer with Benediction, and Imposition of hands: And it is not the Lawfulness of this; for that's proved before: but whether this Manner and Solemnity be a thing which ordinarily we should observe? And that it is so, this feems to me to prove, 1. As beyond Controversie it belongeth to Spiritual Superiours, even the Ministers of Christ, to Pray for the people; and Bless them, so this must be in a special manner exercised upon great and special Occasion: But the Admission of the Adalt upon their personal Covenanting and Profession, is a great and Special.

special Occasion: This is as good an Argument as we have for stated Family-prayer, that I remember; and it's cleerly good for both.

I. I should but trouble you to prove the General Part of the Major, that it belong. eth to the Pastours to Pray for, and Bless the people Ministerially. 2. And the application to this season is proved thus; 1. All things are Santtified by the Word and Prayer: Therefore this. 2. If the great and special works, and changes of our lives, be not thus to be Sanctified, much less the smaller; and so the whole Command would be void. Weagree, that at Marriage, at our Inveftiture in the Ministerial Office, &c. there must be Ministerial Prayer, and Benediction, usually to Sanctifie it to the faithful: But here there is as great, if not greater reason for it, the change and

bleffing being in some fort greater * .

And as this is plain for

And as this is plain for Ministerial Prayer and Benediction, so it seems that the Weight and Nature of the work, doth determin us to the signe of Imposition of hands, seeing God hath not tyed * As fome doubt whether Conversion, or building up be the greater work (and give it to the later, that they may conclude the later only to be the work of Passours, and the former, but of gisted private men (so the doubt in this

case, is on the same ground, whether Baptizing and Confirming, be not as great as Ordaining, (and some give it to the later, left Presbyters be thought to have power to ordain.) But I Answer both as Aquila

it to any one or two particular cases, but made it a signe of General use, in Spiritual Benediction, and Collations of authority, from a Superiour, or great and special Occasions.

in Scotell. in sent. 4. Des. 7. 8. & 2. pag. 816. In the case of Consirmation: Quando bene sit comparatio harum gratiarum: hac potest sieri dupliciter. Uno modo sine Pracisione; of sic omnino major est gratia consirmationia, quam Baptismalis; sicut bene of perfeste vivere, est melius quam vivere: si autem siat comparatio barum gratiarum cum pracisione, sic major est gratia Baptismalis quam consirmationia, quia majoris virtutis est mortuum vivissicare, quam vivissicatum sortificare. So I say between Initiating a Christian, and Initiating a Minister.

2. But we have yet a more clear proof from Scripture example, AEIS 8. 15, 16, 17. Peter and John were sent to Samaria, when they heard that they believed, and when they were come down, they Prayed for them, that they might receive the Holy Ghost; for as yet he was fallen on none of them: only they were Baptized in the Name of the Lord Jesu: Then laid they their hands on them, and they received the Holy Ghost. So

Atts 19.

Alts 19. 5, 6. When they herad this, they were Baptized in the Name of the Lord fesus: And when Paul had laid his hands upon them, the Holy Ghost came on them, and they spake with Tongues, and Prophesisd. And Alts 9. 17. Ananias laid his hands on Saul (before Converted by a voice from Heaven, though not Baptized) that he might receive his sight and the Holy Ghost at once.

And this was the gift that Simon Magus would have bought with money. And it feemeth to me most probable, that this was the gift that Timothy received by Laying on of Pauls hands (which being for the fervice of the Church, I Cor. 12.7. He was to stirre up, and exercise in his Ministry) 2 Tim. 1.6. And that the Laying on of the hands of the Presbytery, I Tim. 4. 14. was at another time. That the Holy Ghost was then given by Prayer, with Imposition of hands, is thus evident.

IV. But the last Point remaineth, Whether this were not Temporary and now ceased: (whether I shall take in the fifth particular, before named, about the Aptitude of the means now.) And I. When I have proved it once Appointed, it lyeth on the contrary minded, to prove it changed, or ceased: That's the task of them that affirm it ceased.

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If

If I shew them an obligation once laid, they must prove it taken off. Their only Argument is, that the persons and occasion were only extraordinary, and are ceased, and therefore so is the signe or means. To which I Answer, 1. By denying the Antecedent; both as to persons and occasion: They were not Only extraordinary. 2. By the denying the Consequence, as it is inferred from the persons: For extraordinary persons were our patterns for ordinary, durable works.

But I prove the Negative: 1. The Use and Ends of the Ancient Imposition of hands do still continue: Therefore we are to judge that the signe and means is not to cease. For the proofe of the Antecedent, remember that I have before proved, that it was not only (though very eminently) the gift of Tongues and Miracles, that was then meant by the Holy Ghost that was given, but also Correborating Grace. And the necessity and actual collation, and use of this doth still continue.

2. There is still a discernable Aptitude in the means to these necessary Ends. The Baptized believer may yet want the foy of the Holy Ghost, and boldness of Access to God, and the shedding abroad of suller Love in the heart, Rom. 5. 5, And that Consolation which is

means of Refermation and Reconciliation. 121

much of the work of the promised Spirit, which therefore is called the Comforter; and that Corroboration, and Stability which he needeth. Now to have a Messenger of Christ that hath received a binding and loofing power. in the Name of Christ to Encourage us in our Profession, and to put up Solemn Prayers for us, and as it were take us by the hand, and place us in the higher form (at least, to place us at our first, personal Profession, among Adult believers) and make particular application of the Promife to us, and Bless us in the Name of Christ, by virtue of their Ministerial Office; this must needs tend much to confirm, and comfort, and encourage the weak. Though still further Ministerial Confirmation by Praying, and Exhortation will be necessary to the end, Alts 14. 22. & 15. 31, 32.

3. The Scripture fignifieth to us, that Imposition of hands was of standing use in the Church, and therefore not to cease with Miracles. In Heb. 6. 2. We find it named among the parts of the Foundation, Laying on of hands. Now all the doubt is, what Imposition of hands is there mentioned. I. For them that think the Apostle meaneth Jewish Imposition, when he mentioneth the Christian Foundation Points, I think their Opinion

pion faveth me the labour of Confuting it. 2. Either then it is Imposition of hands, in case of Ordination, or in case of Confirmation, or in case of Absolution, or for working Miraculous cures. The last alone it cannot be .. because we find it among Foundation Points, and find it a continued thing; and because there is no evidence, to lead us to fuch a restrained exposition. And if it be in the case of Absolution, or Ordination, that Imposition is to continue, it will by consequence be proved, that it no more ceaseth here then there. And usually they that question theuse of it in one case, question it in the rest. 3. For my part, I think that it is no one of these cases alone, that the Scripture here speaketh of, but of the Power and use of it in General, for the Ministers of Christ to be his Instruments, in conferring Evangelical Gifts, and Power, by imposition of hands. We must not limit, and restrain the sence of Scripture, without Evident cause. It is as if the Apostle had said, You are long agoe taught the Necessity of Repenting, and for saking the works of Death, and of Believing in the true God, and of being Dedicated, and Engaged to Father, Sonne, and Holy Ghost in the Baptismal Covenant, in which you your selves have been consecrated unto God, and received

received the remission of sinne; and you have seen the Power that is given to the Ministers of Christ, that by their Prayers, and Imposition of hands, Miracles have been wrought to confirm their Dostrine, and Grace is given to confirm the Soul, and Absolution and Peace is given to the Penitent, and Ministeriall Power delivered to others, &c. But however you understand this Imposition of hands, without apparent violence, you must confess either Imposition in the case that we are speaking of, or that which will warrant it, and stands on the same ground, to be here

So I Tim. 5. 22. Lay hands suddenly on no man, neither be partaker of other mens summer. Somethink that here is meant Imposition of hands in Ordination, and some that it's meant only of Confirmation, and some of Absolution; but however, it will help us in

the following Argument.

4. Scripture fully proveth that Laying on of hands, is a thing to be continued to other Uses, where the reason of continuance is the same: Therefore we are not to judge it ceased as to this use. This Text last named, shows that it is a standing, or continued thing; and if for Absolution, then for Confirmation; and if for Ordination, then for both the other.

So 1 Tim. 4. 14. Sheweth, that the Presbyetery did lay hands on Timothy in Ordination: And if it cease not to this, it ceaseth not to

other continuing ules.

This much from Scripture, for Impolition of hands, is more then Nothing, though it may not be fo full as you expected: But on the contrary, Nothing is brought to prove it unlawfull, that's worth the mentioning.

The last thing that I have to do, is to argue from the Practice of the Church, as the Expofition of these texts of Scripture. If the Universal Church of Christ have used Confirmation by Prayer, and Laying on of hands, as a Practice received from the Apostles, and no other beginning of it can be found; then have we no reason to think the Ceremony to beceafed, or to interpret the forementioned Scripture, contrary to this Practice of the Universal Church: But the Antecedent is true, as I now come briefly to prove, supposing what Mr Hanner hath said. It is commonly known, that the Ancientest Canons of the Church do speak of this as the unquestioned Practice and duty of the Church: So that to recite Canons were loss of time in so known a case. And if any fay that Anointing and Croffing were Ancient; I Answer, I. That they were as ancient in the Popish use, as the Matter of a Sacrament, or as necessary fignes, is not true, nor proved, but disproved by our Writers,

against the Popish Confirmation frequently. 2. Nor can it be proved that they were as Ancient as Indifferent things. 3. We prove the contrary, because they were never used in Scripture times, their being no mention of them. 4. So that we bring Antiquity but to prove the continuance of a Scripture Practice, and so to clear the sence of it: But the Papists plead the Fathers, for that which Scripture is a stranger to.

Greg. M. in Epist. ad Quirin. (Leg. inter Usserii Hybernie. Epist. 2. p. 6.) Et quidem ab antiqua Patrum inftitutione didicimus, ut qui apud barefin in Trinitatis Nomine Baptizantur, cum ad Santtam Ecclefiam redeunt, aut unffione Chrismatis . . dut Impositione manuum, aut sola professione fidei, ad sinum matris Ecclesia revocen,

If Ignatius ad Heronem Diaconum be genuine, there's this testimony, Nihil sine Episcopu operare. Sacerdotes enim sunt the autem Diaconus Sacerdotum: Illi baptizant, sacrificant, manus imponunt, tu autem ipsis ministra. I recite it out of Vshers' Latin co-

py, as supposed the most pure.

Tertullian lib. de Proscript, cap. 36. appealing to the practice of the Apostle ?chn, in the Africane Churches, mentioneth, as

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his Faith that he taught; one God the Creatour, and Jesus Christ the Sonne of God, and the Resurrection of the body, and that he joyned the Law and Prophets, with the Evangelical, and Apostolik Writings, and thence drunk this Faith: And of his Practice be saith, Aqua signat, Santto Spiritu vestit; Euchristia pascit; as three diftinct Ordinances. Lib. de Baptismo cap. 8. Having mentioned Baptism, (and the Unction joyned to that, and not then to Confirmation) he addeth, De hine manus imponitur, per benedictionem advocans, & invitans Spiritum Sanctum.

Idem de Resur. Carn. cap. 8. Sed & caro abluitur, ut anima emaculetur: Caro unquitur, ut anima consecretur: Caro fignatur, ut & anima muniatur: Caro manus Impositione adumbratur, ut & anima Spiritu illuminetur.

Cyprian ad Stephan, Epist. 72. Et ad fubaian, is too much for it. I will not trouble you in citing any Writers, fince General Councels were in use, because their testimony is enough. He that would fee fuch, may read Barronius ad An. 35, at large. So much for the proof of the fitness of Imposition of bands in Confirmation.

I come now to the second Part of my Proposition, position, viz. That this Ceremony is not of such Necessity, as that such as scruple it, should be denied liberty of forbearing the reception of it, if they submit to the Ministerial tryal and Approbation of their Profession, and admission, and reception to Church priviledges.

For proof of this consider, I. That we do not find that God any where Instituted this signe, as a matter of Necessity, still without interruption, to be used; but only that by holy men it was applyed as a convenient figne, or gesture to the works, in which they used it. Even as Lifting up of hands in Prayer was ordinarily used as a fit gesture, not wilfully to be neglected without cause, and yet not of flat necessity; or as kneeling in Prayer, is ordinarily meet, but not alway necessary. We find no more Scripture for the

one then for the other:

The Ancient Church also used it fo variously, as that it is plain, they fixed it to no one case alone. Of the divers cases, in which they Impofed hands (on the Catechumens and foure times on the Penitents, and divers other,) You may see in Albaspinaus Observationes, Obs. 31, 32. dy pasfim. Gratius Epift. 154. p. 379. Manus impositas baptizatis, nisi ab in, qui ius haberent conferendi calestia illa dona. primis temporibus non apparet. Serius id introductum est in Episcoporum honorem, quo mazis in Apostolicum Which

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jus successifie crederentur. Nec causa aberat, quam. Caremonia illi, velut naturalem diximus, pracandi scilicet Deum, ut ei qui baptiz atus jam fidem erat Professiu, ea largiri vetlet, qua ad prastandum in side, maxime in periculis gravibus, sunt necessaria. Which indeed sheweth on one side, how causeless it is to question the Lawfullness of it, any more then of Listing up the the hands, or Kneeling; and yet how little reason there is on the other side, to make it a matter of stat necessity.

Kneeling in Prayer, and

Lifting up the hands were oft omitted, fo we find that sometime the Holy Ghost is given before Baptism, or Imposition of hands, Alls 10. And we find not that the Apostles used it to all (though I confess the Negative arguing is infirm; yet it seems not probable, that this was alwaies done.

3. It is somewhat suspicious to find in fushin Martyr's description, of the Christian Churches Practices; no mention of this, nor any Sacrament, but Baptism, and the Lords Supper, mor any of the Roman Ceremonies: And Ireneus; and some other are silent in it.

4. God maketh no Ceremonies under the Gospel so necessary, (except the two Sassaments) nor layeth so great a stress on them,

them as under the Law: And therefore we are not to interpret the Gospel as laying mensSalvation, or the Peace of the Church onany Cerimonies; unless we find it clearly expressed.

5. For all that I have faid from Scripture for Imposition of hands in Consirmation, though the lawfulness of it is proved past doubt, yet the proofe of the duty of using it, is lyable to so many Objections, as that I must needs conclude, that the Gospel tenderness & the sense of our mutual infirmities, and our care of tender Consciences and of the Churches Peace, should restrain all the Sons of Piety and Peace, from making it a matter of slat Necessity, and forcing them that scruple it, to submit to it.

And now having said thus much of Imposition of hands, and Confirmation, asgrounded on the Apostles example; I must agains and agains remember you, that this is in a manner but ex abundanti, and that the cause that I am pleading, doth not at all need it; but that I did before most clearly manisest the Truth of my position upon other grounds, upon which I shall proceed; and having shewed the Necessity of Ministerial judging of mens Prosession, and the personal Covenanting of the Adult, and the Lawfullness of imposing hands therein, I go on as to the manner.

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THE DOWNER WE STATE THE

Prop. 14. Though in Receiving Adult perfons out of Insidelity by Baptism into the Church; a sudden Profession without any stay to see their Reformation, may serve turn; yet in the receiving those that were Baptized heretofore, into the Number of Adult-members, or to the Priviledges of sach, their lives must be enquired after, which must be such as do not confuse their Profession.

VE find in Scripture, that the Converted were suddenly Baptized, and they stayed not for any Reformation of life to go before. Indeed the Ancient Chrehes aferwards kept their Catechumens long in expectation; but that was not to see their lives first reformed, but that they might have time to teach them the Doctrine of Christ, which they must know before they could be Converts indeed. The Apostles did sudden-

Leg. que habet Grotius Difcuf. Apol.Rivet. p. 235. Cum antecedentib. ex Antiq. & de fuis. ly Baptize, converted Jews and Profelites, because they had so much preparatory knowledg, as that a shorter teaching might acquaint them with

the Christian doctrine. But the Heathens

must be long in learning so much as the Jews

knew before Conversion.

Yet if the Catechumens did fall into groß sinne in time of their expectation and learning, they were so much the longer delayed. because it signifyed, that their first professed defires of entering into the Church, upon

Christs terms, were not right.

But the Baptized fland upon other terms: For 1. They are already in Covenant with God the Father, Sonne, and Holy Ghoff: and have renounced the flesh, the world, and the Devil, and promised obedience to God, and to live according to their Covenant. And this the Church hath still required of them, as I shewed out of Justin Martyr, and others before * Dio-

* Read the whole nysius (or whoever else) order of Baptism in lib. de Hierarch Ecclef. in Diony sius ibid. saith, Ipse autem se omni.

c. 4.

no ea que tradentur, sequniurum esse pollicetur: And Ex eo praterea querit, num ita infituat vivere, cum promisit asseverationibus, &c. upon which saith Albaspinaus, Quia scilicet fidem Christianam, Christianumque vivendi genus, & mores, sese complexos persegunturisque jucabant, antequam baptizarentur. (in Tertul. de Panit. pag. 289.) & Postea. Non ac-

cedebans

cedebant ad Baptismum nisi de rebus sidei plane instructi, id est, de Dei magnitudine, & potesstate rebusque que in Evangeliu continentur, uno excepto Eucharistia mysterio; neque baptizabantur, nisi post quam ca omnia se credere jurassent, quorum sides a side pænitentie incipiebat, &c. Et in sequ. Jucabant in Baptis-

* That is not to rurn to an ungodly life, but to endeavour and perform fincere obedience. Albaspin. in Tertul. de Panintent. cap. 7. Sexcentis locis, non dicam boc capite; unam ait tantum a lavacro veniam superesse, neque ullum primis illis temporibus inter privatam aut publicam graviurum criminum discrimen invenient. Vide ca-TETA.

mo solennibus verbis, sc nunquam * peccatures; deinde renunciabant Diabolo & pompis ejue. Denique Censurà, si peccarent post baptismum coercebantur. So that men that are engaged in covenant with God, must keep Covenant, or manifest themfelves Penitent, for the violation of it, before they are admitted to further Priviledges. There is a long time, in which they grow up from an In-

fant-state to an Adult; and how they live in

that time, must be enquired after.

2. Otherwise the Apostate would have equal Acceptance and Priviledges with the Faithfull.

3. And fo Penitence and Absolution would

would be excluded and confounded with meer Confirmation.

4. Moreover the Baptized are obliged to be responsible for their lives, being under the Government of Christs Ministers, and

among his Saints.

5. For the sake of their own Souls, and of the Church and Ordinances, we must endeavour to preserve them from Corruption, which lying Professions would introduce; and therefore must not overlook, or neglect such Evidence as is within our reach.

6. Else Ministers that are by office to judg of their Profession, would be unfaithfull Judges, and forfeit their trust, if they shall wilfully neglect any Evidence within their cognisance, by which they may be enabled

to judge.

But yet it is not the certainty of inward faving Grace, that we must find out by mens lives; for no man can have such certainty of another: but only that their lives be not such, as Null and Invalidate, and consute their Profession, and they live not in the persidious violation of their Baptismal Covenant.

Prop. 15. It is not of flat Necessity that the Profession of the Expectant be made in the open Congregation, or before many, in order to his Confirmation and Admittance.

PRoved, 1. It is not of Necessity, that Converted Infidels be admitted by Baptism into the state of Adult-members, upon a Publique Profession in a Congregation: therefore it is not of Necessity, that others be so admitted in Confirmation. The Antecedent is proved by the instance of the Ennuch, Acts 8. whom Philip Baptized in their way, and the Jaylour and his houshold, Acts 16. Baptzed in the night at home. The Consequence is proved by the propriety of reason and case.

2. If a man may by Confirmation be admitted into the Number of Adult Christians, in the Church Universal, without being admitted into a particular Church, then his Peosession and Admission need not (in that case) to be before the Congregation: But the Antecedent is true: as I prove thus. A man may by Adult Baptism, be admitted first into the Universal Church only: (As was the Eunach, the Jaylour, Lydia, Sergim Panlus, and every first Convert in any

City,

City, where the Apostles came:) Therefore a man may by Consirmation be admitted into the Number of the Adult, in the Catholick Church only: For the reason is the same, and the former admitteth them into the same number.

The Consequence of the Major is plain. For no one Congregation more then another, can claim the cognisance of the Admission of a member into the Universal Church, or Confirming them in it.

3. Scripture hath no where made such Publique Admission to be of constant Necessity:

therefore it is not so.

4. Else none could be Admitted, or Confirmed when persecution hindereth Church Assemblies.

5. The Church is to believe and trust the Pastours, to whom it doth by office belong

to try and admit them.

6. General unfixed Ministers may thus try, approve, and confirm, who are not Pastours of any particular Church: (such as Apostles, Evangelists, and others were:) therefore they are not alwaids to do it before a paricular Church: Nor indeed did they alway do so.

where the Apoldes auto: 1 Lucte

Prop. 16. When a Person is admitted among the Adult-members of a Particular Church; as well as the Universal; his Profession and Admission must be either before the Church, or Satisfactorily made Known to the Church at least, who must Approve of it by a Judgment of Discretion, in order to their Communion with him: and this among we is the ordinary case; because it is the duty of all that have opportunity, to joyn themselves to some particular Church; and it is in such Churches, that Communion in publique Worship and Order must be had, either statedly, or transiently and temporarily.

and their Communion, is of very great advantage, as I shall manifest more anon.

Read Dr Hammond's Prad. Catech. 1. 5. §. 4. pag. 298, 299. Of the Communion of Saints.

Albaspinæus in Tertul. de Pænitent. cap. 8, 9. pag. 291. Cumpro foribus Tem2. We that are commonly against the private Admission of Insants (at least except in some urgent case) have less reason to be for the private Transition and Admission of men among the Adult,

means of Reformation and Reconciliation. 137

Adult, and that into pli starent penitena particular Governed tes, pretereuntibus sa-Church.

cerdotibus , caterisque fidelibus omni-

bus, omnino dolentis animi signis panitentiam suam testabantur, lacrymis non parcebant, precibus infiitebant, volvebantur, dy si que alia habet penitentia, que miserecordiam movere possint; non omittebant, ut pacem recupearent. Primum ante sacerdotes procumbebant, martyribus deinde adgeniculabantur, cateris denique fratribus 19 viduis, ut ait Pacianus, enixe supplicabant, ut à Deo 17 ab Ecclesia veniam pro se impetrarent.

3. The whole Society among whom such a person is entered, do owe him much duty and brotherly affiftance: They must Love him wich a special Lave: They must live, though not in a Levelling, yet in a Charitable Community with him, not shutting up the bowels of Compassion from him, when they fee him in want, but relieving him, as if they fufferd with him: They are not only to Love him, and Relieve him as a man; but as one of Christ's little ones, or friends; yea as his brethren, yea as loving and relieving Christ in them, Matth. 25. 35. to the end. They must receive and relieve a Disciple in the name of a Disciple. Besides this, they must have Church-U iion and Communion with him, as one Body; and must pray for him, and rejoice with him in Gods Praifes, and

the Lords Supper, and watch over him. and admonish and reprove him in sinne, for his recovery; and avoid him if he walk diforderly, and be impenitent in scandalous

sinne . &c.

Now 1. No man can perform all this duty. to a man that he knoweth not to be thus related to him: If he know not that he owes him this duty, any more then to any one else in the world, how shall he pay it him? To fay that we are bound to take all men, that converse with us, to be such; is to say, that Christians must renounce their witts, and purn the Church into Bedlam.

2. And as this proves, that the Churchmembers must be made known to one another, so it proves that they must have a Judgment of Discretion in receiving them: (though the Pastours have the Judgment of Governing Direction.) For r. God hath not left the Pastours at liberty, to take in whom they Please; but hath described what Profession they shall accept, or what perfons they shall admit, and whom they shall reject. If therefore the Pastours go against the Word of God, then this following is the peoples duty: 1. If they know not the errour, or the case be doubtfull, they are to reft in Obedience to their Pastours, (for

that's undoubtedly their duty) the work being the Pastours and not theirs. 2. But if the case be plainly contrary to the Scripture. (as if he would admit an Impenitent Drunkard . Fornicatour , &c.) they must disown his sinne, that it lie not upon them, and refuse private familiarity with that person; but not withdraw from publick Ordinances, because of his presence. For when they have done their duty, and rid themselves of the guilt by a diffent, the person is to them as Morrally absent, though Locally and Phyfically present; and the Ordinance is not defiled to them by his Corporal presence; but the guilt will lie on the Rulers of the Church: otherwise, all Churches should be broken in pieces, if the people must seperate, when every one that they are confident is unworthy is Introduced: and the Governed will become the Governours. 3. But if it be not a few that the Pastours thus introduce against the certain Word of God; but so many and fuch as will corrupt the substance of the

Church, and make it an uncapable matter for the form, and so to become another thing, and destroy the very Ends of Church-affociation, so that it is no longer a Communion of Saints; then the people fearing God, are bound to stop this

hefore

before it have quite corrupted the Church, by admonishing the Pastours, and advising with neighbour Churches to admonish them; and if that prevail not, by rejecting them; and if they cannot do so, by reason of a Major Vote of uncapable persons, they ought to withdraw themselves, and worship God

Albaspin. ubi sup. Animadvertendum est, panitentes non solum bac de similia ezisse, ut cum Deo in gratiam redirent, verum etiam ut sacerdotes, de cateros fratres aquiores haberent, in quorum arbitrio de judicio nonnunquam erat, eos in Ecclesia revocare.

I cite this to shew what Conisance the people were to have of such affairs. in fuch a Church as is truly capable of the Name and Ends: And this is a Lawfull and Necessary separation; of which as it is a duty, God is the Cause; and as it is a forsaking of the rest, the culpable cause is only in themselves. I can easily prove all this, but that I think it needless tediouses.

4. And indeed it would be very hard measure, if at the corrupt administra-

tion of a carnal, or carles, or erroneous Pastour, all the Church must be under an Obligation to give their estates by way of relief to every one, that he will put the name of a Christian and Church member upon unworthily: Then may he force them to main-

tain all the beggars and rogues about them, though they were Infidels and impious men. I speak not of the common relief of the needy; for that I know they owe to an Infidels but of the special Community, which Charity must make among the Disciples of Christ. It's against all Reason, that an erring or careless Pastour, shall thus Command all the Peoples estates, by introducing such without their consent, whom they are bound thus to maintaine.

5. Yea indeed, the Spirit of God, is in the Saints, a Spirit of discerning; so that it is not Possible that all the Church should in their Assections obey such a corrupt Administratour, by Loving all the notorious, ungodly men, as Saints, with the special Love of brethren, whom he will carefesty, or erroneously put in the place of Saints. I cannot possibly Love that man as a Saint, or Disciple of Christ, that I am certain is his enemy, and none such.

I conclude therefore, that though the people be not Church governours by a Vote (that's a great errour) yet they have a Judgment of Discerning, according to which, they must obey, or reject their Passours administrations. And he that denyeth this, and would have them yield an Absolute obedience. 142 Confirmation & Restauration the Necessary

dience, without trying, choosing and refufing, would not only make the Paffours to be of a Papal streine, but would give them a Jesuitical Obedience, above what the moderate Papists give the Pope. And therefore seeing that ad finem there is a Necessity that the People confent, (or else they cannot Obey, nor hold communion with the perfon) therefore there is also the same Necesity ad finem that they have fatisfaction offered them, and have either the cognifance of the Profession, and admission of the person, or that they be satisfied in the fidelity of their Pastours in Administration, and that he seek their consent; or (which is best) that some chosen persons do Represent them, and be present at such Professions with the Pastours; and the Pastours, and their own Delegates together; do acquaint the Congregation of all that are Admitted, and of their Satisfactory Prfession, that they may hold Communion with them. This I speak of those (which are very many) that are fit for Church-communion, and yet through bashfullness, or want of utterance, are unable to make a Publike Profession before all (The choisest Christians that I have known, have been such:) But those that are able, should rather in Publike make their own Profession. Object.

Object. But what if one part of the Congregation approve of the Person and Profession, and the other disallow it?

Answ. 1. They are to be governed by the Pastours. 2. And consult with the Pastours of Neighbour Churches, in cases of great weight aed danger. 3. And the lesser part of the Church, in doubtfull cases, and tollerable differences, is to yield to the greater part: Not as if a Major Vote had the Government of the rest (much less of their Governours;) but in Order to Unity the sewer must submit.

Quest. But what if the people would have the Pastour Baptize, Confirm, or introduce an open hereticke, or wicked person in his impenitency?

Answ. The Pastour must obey God, and

refuse to obey them.

Quest. And what if the People think a man unfit, whom the Pastour Would Approve and Introduce?

Answ. 1. He may admit him into the Universal Church: notwithstanding their unjust refusall. 2. He hath power to Admit him into that particular Church, against their unjust diffent, as he is the Ruler of the Church, and the Administratour of the Ordinances. 3. He hath Authority to persuade

swade and command them from Christ, to hold communion with the person, and do their duty to him: which if they do not they commit a double finne: one of unjustice and uncharitableness, in a caustels rejecting of a member of Christ; and another of disobedience, against the fifth Commandement. 4. But yet the Passours cannot force the people to obey their advice, and command, nor effectually procure it perhaps. 5. And therefore their forementioned Power is pot alwaies to be exercised. For it is in vaine to use a means, that will rather hinder the Endthen attain to it; and so is at that time, no means. Sometimes the Pastour may see just cause to exercise all this Power, and execute his part of Church communion with the person, in administring the Ordinances to him, and leave the people anfwerable to God, for refusing their part: But this is not an usual case: Usually, if he fee the People refolve against Communion; with that person (how fit soever,) he is publickly to cleare himfelf by disallowing them in their sinne, and reproving them for it, and leaving the blame on them; and then in Prudence to forbear the Intruding of the person; because no duty is at all times a duty to be performed; and especially when the

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fithe Church, is like to be far greater then he good, if it be done. 6. But if the Church should be so corrupted, as that the Major Vote doth set against Faith and Godines as such, and so will not admit a sound number to be added to them, the Pastour with the Minor part, may after due Admonition and Patience, as justly reject the guilty and obstinate, as if they were but one man, not not a Major part.

What is said of this case of Admission, solds also of Rejection by Excommunication, and of other Antecedent acts of Disci-

line.

4. Laftly, If Excommunication must usully be done in publique, before the whole Church, that they may know whom to void, and know the Reason of it; then Adnission must usually be done in publique (the Person or the Pastour, opening the case to the people) that they may know whom to have Communion with; and know the Reason of of it: but the Antecedent is confessed by almost all. And its proved plainly by Paul's practice and direction, I Cor y. throughout: And it was the custom of the Christian Churches in Tertullians daies, Apolog. cap. 39. There also (in the Christian meeting for L Worlbip)

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worship) are exercised exhortations, castingations and the Divine Censure: for Judgment is passed with great deliberation, or weight, as with men that are assured of the presence, or sight of God: and it is the highest Representation of the Judgment to come, if any one so offend, as that he be discharged, or banished from Communion of Prayer, and of the Assembly, and of all holy Commerce, or

fellowship.

Abundance more out of Cyprian, and others might be easily produced, to prove that this which I have spoken, was the ancient interest of the people in these Churchaffaires: Yea in the choise of their Pastours. yea and in rejecting unworthy Pastours, Cyprian faith, they had a chief Interest: Not by Ruling Power, but by a prudent exercife of obedience, choosing the good, and refusing the evil. Self-preservation is naturall to every body, where it is not by evil means, and to the hurt of the Publike State. It's hard if a Natural body may not lawfully refuse, or cast up Poison, if a Governour should give it them. God bindeth none to the perdition of their Souls; nor any holy Society to destroy it self, or suffer it self to be defroyed, or corrupted by others, without the use of all just means, to reful the

bane. But of this I shall desire the Reader, that would know the Judgment and Practice

of the Ancient Church, to peruse Dr Blondel de Jure plebis in Regimine Ecclesiast. adjoyned to that excellent piece of Gretius de Imperio summarum Pot statum virca Sacra.

To recite more after all those of Blondel, is but to do a needles work. There's enough to fatisfie all that are moderate for Popular Interest.

This much may fatisfie you, that it should not be usually a secret but a solemn Transition from an Infant state of membership, into an Adult-state; and that by a publike Profession or Notification of it, the particular Church should have satisfaction herein.

Prop 17 It is convenient, though not of Necessity, that every Church do keep a Regifier, of all that are admitted thus into the Number of the Adult-members.

As we were wont to keep a Register of the Infants Baptized, so have we as much Reason, of the Adult, Approved and Confirmed or Restored. Corporations of old, were wont to keep a book of the names of their Burgesses or Citizens: in respect to the burgesses of their Burgesses or Citizens:

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which God is said to have a Book of Life, wherein he writes mens names, and out of which he blots them, speaking after the manner of men. The Church hath great reason for this practice, the business being of so great weight; that we forget not who are of our Communion: which without a Register, in great Congregations, must needs be done. If any be so vaine, as to demand a Scripture proofe of this; let him first bring me a Scripture-proofe, that he may read with spectacles, or write a Sermon from the Preachers mouth, or use Notes in the Pulpit, or print, &c. and then I will give him proofe of this: In the mean time, if this do not satisfie him, he shall have liberty to disuse it.

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Prop. 18. Those that were never thus Ministerially and Explicitly Approved, Consirmed or Absolved (after an ungodly
life,) but have been permitted without it,
to joyne or dinarily with the Church in Prayer and Praises, and have been admitted to
the Communion of the Church, in the
Lords Supper, are approved and confirmed,
Eminently though not Formally: though in
so doing, both the Pastours and themselves
did sin against God, by the violation of his
hely Order. So that such may be a true
Church, though much corrupted or disordered.

This I adde for two Reasons: 1. To confute them that say our Churches are no true Churches, for want of an explicite Profession. 2. And to acquaint you who it is among us, that are, or are not to be called to Confirmation.

1. It is not the degree of clearness and openness in our Profession, or in the Ministerial Approbation or Admission, that is Essential to a Church-member. An obscure Profession may be truly a Profession. Some obscure Profession, hath been ordinarily made by our people in this Land beretofore,

by their ordinary hearing the Word, and standing up at the Recital of the Creed; and joyning with the Church in Prayer and Praise, and confessing the Scriptures to be the Word of God, and acknowledging the Ministry: And a further Profession they made, by actual receiving the Lords Supper, which is a silent Profession of their Faith in Christ. And though they were not folemnly Approved and Confirmed, (except that one of many, had a Cerimonious Confirmation from the Bishop in their Childhood) yet were they Actually admitted to daily Communion with the Church, and the special part of Communion in the Lords Supper. And though this Profession and admission was lamentably defective, (of which more anon) yet it is such as may prove our ordinary Assemblies to have been true Churches.

2. And I do not think it fit, that any that have been already admitted to Church-communion in the Lords Supper, should be now called out to Confirmation, by Imposition of hands; though where there is just cause to question their Knowledg, Faith, or lives, they may by the Postour be called to give an account of them; and put upon a clearer Prosession then they have yet made: But sure when they have been admit-

ted to the Lords Supper, by any regular Ministry and Church, they are to be taken for Adult-members, till they are justly cast out, or do cast out themselves. For the more Perfect doth include the less Perfect in it: If a man be ordained a Presbyter, that was never ordained Deacon, he is not to be called back againe and made a Deacon. If you make a man free of your Trade, before he was ever bound prentice, you cannot call him back againe, and bind him prentice after this. If the University give a man the Degree of Doctor of Divinity, or Master of Arts, that never took Degree of Batchelour of Divinity, or of Arts, they cannot afterwards call him back to take his Batchelours Degree. If you have irregularly admitted the untryed, unapproved, unconfirmed to the Lord Supper, you have Eminenter, though not Formaliter Confirmed and Approved him though irregularly. Of this more anon.

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Prop. 19. So exceeding great and many are the mischiefs that have befallen us, by the neglect of a solemn meet Transition from an Infant, into the Adult Church state, and which undoubtedly will continue, till this be remedyed, that all Magistrates, Ministers, and People, that dissemble not, in professing themselves to be Christians, should with speed and diligence attempt the Cure.

Let us here take a view of the case of our Nation, and Congregations, and then consider of the effects and consequents.

All the people of our Parishes, (except Anabaptists) do bring their Children to be Baptized; which if it were faithfully done, were a happy means of an early engagement unto Christ, and a happy enterance upon surther mercy.) Multitudes of those know not what Baptism is, nor to what use and end it is appointed, nor what benefit their Children may receive by it: (I speak upon too sure and large experience) nor do they know what Christianity is, nor who Jesus Christ is, nor what it is, that they are to do in Baptism: But there they make a promise customarily, as they are bid, in words not under-

understood, that they will acquaint their children at age with the Covenant there made (which they never understood themselves) and that they will educate them in Godliness, when they hate Godline's at the heart. And when they come home, they performe their promise accordingly: They teach them nothing of the Doctrine of Christianity, and the life to come, but they give them up to the flesh and the world, which there in words they did renounce; and they teach them by their daily examples to curse, and swear, and raile, and to be proud and covetuous, and voluptuous, serving their bellies in stead of God; and hateful reproaching a godly life, instead of teaching it their Children. These Children are customarily brought to the Assemblies, where they heare the plainest teaching, without understanding, or regarding it, and grow hardened under daily reproofs and exhortations; living as their Parents taught them, some in gross ignorance and worldlyness, without any signes of Godlyness, further then to come to Church; some in Drunkenness, some in Whoredom, abundance in a malignant hatred of a holy life, making them that use it the common scorne, and taking them for the hatefullest persons in the Parish, or Country where

where they live: For custome sake, and to quiet their Conscience in their sinne, they will come to the Lords Table, if they be admitted by the Pastour, and may have it in their mode and way : And if a Minister shall defire them to come to him first, that he may understand their knowledg and Profession, they fcorn it; and ask him by what Authority he would examine them, and what proof he hath that men must be examined, before they be admitted to the Lords Supper? And fome felf-conceited, half-witted Writers have taught them this leffon, and made Ministerial tryal and Approbation odious to them. But because they were once Baptized, and have since come to hear and joyne with us in the Assembly, therefore they think that they have right to all Ordinances, and are true Christians and Adult members of the Church; and also exempt from the Government of the Pastours, that require them to fubmit to the means of their own good. In the Bishops daies, some few of them were Confirmed: (in the Country where I lived, about one of ten or twenty) and what that was, and how it was done I can tell you, but what I once made tryall of. When I was a Schoole boy, about 15 years of age, the Bishop coming into the Country, many

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went in to him to be Confirmed: we that were boies, runne out to see the Bishop among the rest, not knowing any thing of the meaning of the business: when we came thither, we met about thirty or fourty in all, of our own stature and temper, that had come for to be Bishopt, as then it was called: The Bishop examined us not at all in one Article of the Faith; but in a Church-yard, in halt, we were fer in' a rank, and he past hafilly over us, laying his hands on our head, and faying a few words, which neither I nor any that I spoke with, understood; so hastily were they uttered, and a very short prayer recited, and there was an end. But whethey we were Christians or Infidels, or knew so much as that there was a God, the Bishop little knew, nor enquired. And yet he was one of the best Bishops esteemed in England. And though the Canons require, that the Curate or Minister send a Certificate that children have learnt the Catechism; yet there was no such thing done, but we runne of our own accord to fee the Bishop only; and almost all the rest of the County, had not this much: This was the old careless practice of this Excellent Duty of Confirmation. Some few (perhaps halfe a Parish in the best places) will send their children to Church, to be

cate-

catechized yet; but even those few that learn the words for the most part understand not what they say, and are as ignorant of the matters, as if they never learnt the words. This is the common way, by which our Parishes come to be Churches, and our people to be Christians; supposing some to be mixt among them, that are more Faithfully devoted to God in Baptism, and better educa-

ted, in the feare of God.

2. Now let us see what are the real, visible, undenyable fruits of this desective sinful course. Because men build upon this Func damental falshood, that infant Baptism upon the Parents Profession, doth give them right to the Church state and Priviledges of the Adult, without any personal Profession and Covenanting with God, when they come to the use of reason, which the Church must have cognisance of; and so they that entred somewhat more Regularly into an Infant Church state, do become Adult-members secretly, unobservedly, and no body well knows how: Hereupon it solloweth,

1. That our Churches are lamentably corrupted and diseased, (though they are true Churches, and have Life in them) while they are made so like the unbelieving and ungodly world; and the Garden of Christ is

made

made too like the common wilderness. For Heathens, and Impious persons, and all forts of the unclean (21moft) are the members of them, where Parishes, or Parishmeetings are made convertible with Churches. I would make the case neither worse nor better then it is. Till within these few years, I knew but very imperfectly how it is, and I thought the case had been better with some, and worse with others then I have found it upon tryall. And had I not fet upon the duty of Personal instruction, I should never have known the state of the people: But now we have dealt with them almost all in private personally, I shall truly tell you the state of this Parish, by which you may conjecture at the rest of the Nation. I know not a Congregation in England that hath in it Proportionably so many that fear God: and yet our whole Parish consisteth of all these forts following. 1. Among eight hundred Families, there are about five hundred persons, fuch as the vulgar call precise, that are rated to be serious Professours of Religion, (or perhaps somewhat more) These live in Unity, and feem to me to feek first the Kingdom of God and his Righteousness; and are of as peaceable, harmles, humble Spirits, and as unanimous without inclination to Sects, or OftenOftentation of their parts, as any people I know. 2. Besides these there are some of competent Knowledg and exterior performances, and lives so blameless, that we can gather from them no certain Proofe, or violent Presumption that they are ungodly, or that their Profession is not sincere. So many of these joyning with the rest, as make about six hundered, do own their Churchmembership, and consent to live under so much of Church-Order and Government, as unquestionably belongeth to Presbyters to exercise, and to be my Pastoral charge.

3. Besides these, there are some that are tractable and of willing minds, that by their expressions seem to be ignorant of the very Essentials of Christanity; which yet I find to have obscure conceptions of the truth, when I have condescendingly better search them, and helped them by my enquiries. These al-

* Of this fourth fort I hope are many that truly fear God, that some on one pretence, and some on an other, forbear to joyn with us in the Communion of the Church, in the Lords Supfo (as weak in the Faith) we receive. * 4. Some there are that are of competent understandings, and of lives so blameless, that we durst not reject them; but they hold off themselves, because they are taught to question, if

not to disown our Administrations; for all that, we give liberty to all that in collerable things do differ. 5. Some there are, that are secret Heathens, believing with Aristotle, that the world was from Eternity; making a fcorn of Christ, and Moses, and Heaven, and Hell, and

Church. Scripture, and Ministers, and all Religion; thinking that there is no Devill, no Immortality of the Soul, or Everlasting Life: But this they reveale only in secret, to those that they find capable, by viciousness, unsetledness, or any malignity, or discontent against the Godly, or the Orders of the Church: And yet for the hiding of their minds, they will hear and urge us to baptize their children, and openly make the most Orthodox Confessions, and secretly deride it when they have done, as I can prove. And this is the only differing party among us, in

Judgment and defigne, that is in danger of leavening many, that God for. saketh. 6. many there are that have tollerable

per: but yet heare, and live in love and

peace with us. And

some do joyn with

us (on the grounds

as godly strangers may be admitted)

fomtime in the

Lords Supper; that

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not a membership

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As I would not have mentioned the faults of any of my Parishioners, but on this necessity of knowledg, opening the flate of the Nation de fallo, fo they have no reafon to take it ill of me. For 1. I accuse none by name. much less the Generality. 2. The Innocent do themselves know, and bewail the finnes that I mention, 3. I am fo far from making them worse then other Parishes, that I unseignedily profel, that I do not know any other in England of so much Godliness, and tra-&ableness; which testimony is true, and more to their honour, then the mentioning of the remnants of ignorance and ungodlyness is to their dishonour: It it be thus, here, how much worfe is it in most parts of the Land?

knowledg, and live in some notorious, scandalous fins: some in gross Covetuousness, and these will not be convinced: fome in common drunkenness, and those will confess their faults, and promise amendment a hundred times over and be drunk within a few daies againe; and thus have spent the most part of their lives: fome in as constant tipling, drinking as great a quantity, but bearing it better away: fome in ordinary fwearing, curling, ribaldry, whoredomes fometimes. Many in neglect of all Family-duties, and the Lords Day: and some in hatefull, bitter fcorns at Prayer, holy Conference, Church Order and holy living, and the people that use it; some-

times tising up in tumults against the Offi-

cers that endeavour to punish a drunkard, or Sabboth breaker, and rescuing them, and feeking the raine of the Officers. 7. Some there are that are of more tractable dispositions, but really know not what a Christian is: that heare us from day to day, yea and fome few of them learn the words of the Catechilm, and yet know not almost any more, then the veryest Heathen in America. They all confess, that we must mend our lives. and serve God: but they know not that God is Eternal, or that Christ is God, or that he is man, but say, he is a Spirit; some say neither God nor man; some say God and not man; some say man and not God: abundance say, He was man on earth, but now He is not: Abundance know not what He came to do in the world: nor that there is any fatifaction made for finne, but what we must make our selves; and they tell me. they trust to nothing for Pardon and Salvatic on, but Gods Mercy, and their good ferving him (which is only faying every night and morning in bed, or as they undress them, the Lords Prayer, and the Creed for a Prayer. and comming to Church.) They fay openly, they do not know of any futery that we have, or any that hath borne the punishment of our sinne, or suffered for us: And when I repéate

repeat the History of the Incarnation, life, death, and resurrection of Christ to them, they fland wondering, and fay, they never heard it before: what the Holy Ghost is, they know not: nor what Sanctification, Faith, or Justification is: nor what Baptism is; nor the Lord's Supper; nor to what ule, but in general, for our Salvation. What a Church is, they know not; nor what is the Office of Pastour or People, fave only to preach and hear, and give and receive the Sacraments. If I ask them what Christianity is, the best answer is, that it is a ferving God as well as we can, or as God will give us leave. So that there is scarce an Article of the Creed, or very few that they tolerably understand. Nay one of about fourescore yeares of age (now dead) thought Christ was the Sunne, that shinethin the Firmament; and the Holy Ghoft was the Moone. 8? Many there be, that joyne this Heathenish ignorance, and wicked obsinacy together; hating to be instructed; scorning to come neer me, to be taught, and to be told of their finne, when they come. They will raile at us bitterly behind our backs, if we will not let them have their own will and way about the Sacraments, and a'l Church-affaires: but they will not submit to that Teaching, that should bring them to know what Christ or Christianity is. 9. Some there be that are of tollerable knowledg, and no Drunkards, nor Whoremongers that the world knoweth of, but of more plaufible lives, and have some formes of Prayer in their families: but yet live in idle or tipling company, or spend their lives

in vanity, and hate more a diligent ferving of God, and heavenly life, then the open Drunkars do: These make it their work to possess people with a hatred of strict Profesfours, and of our Churches and Administrations, and to that end get all the books that are written for admitting all to the Lords

Table, that they can light of; and contrary to the Authors meanings, they make them Engines to harden others in their Im. piety, and hatred of Reformation: The like use

they make of the Writings of many DIG fenting Divines, about Church-governemnt; or any from whence they of reproach against the Pastours and Ordinances among us. 10. Another fort there are, that were

I have but very few of these; but I know neighbour Parifies that have too many, to the grief of their godly Mini-

may fetch matter

This tenth fort, are fome of them infe-Acd by the Infidels (who are all for deeply

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Hobs his Necessity) but most of them have got it, I know not how: but so many are possessed by these conceits, that I little thought, t at neer so many of the ungodly vulgar, had so abused the Doctrine of Predestination and Grace; as if they had been hired to disgrace it.

deeply possess with a conceit, that God having determined before we are borne, whether we shall be faved or not, it is in vaine to strive; for if we be predestinated, we shall be saved what ever we do; and if we be not, we shall not, what ever we do; and that we can do nothing of our selves, nor have a good thought, but by

the Grace of God, and if God will give it us, we shall have it; and the Devil cannot prevaile against him; but if he will not give it us, it's in vaine to feek it; for it is not in him that willeth, nor in him that runneth, but in God that sheweth Mercy; and therefore they give up themselves to security and ungodlinest, because they cannot do nothing of themselves. And thus by misunderstanding some Texts of Scripture, and abusing some Truths of God, they are hardened in ungodliness, thinking that all is long of God: and they will not fo much as promise Reformation, nor promise to use the means, because they say, they cannot tell whether God will put it into their hearts: and

it is all as he will. II. Besides these, there is one or two honest, ignorant Prosessours, that are turned Anabaptists, and joyne with

the Church of them in the next Parish. 12. And some Papists are among us; and whether only those that stay from the Assemblies, I cannot say.

Of these twelve sorts of People, this Parish is composed; which I therefore mention, that the state of our Parishes may be truly known; while others are compared with this: For every one hath not had the opportunities which I have had, to 12. Our Papifts are but few; but if the rest of them be such as ours; their Church hath small reason to boast of its Holiness.

Befide, if all these were fit to be members, yet we must know their own consent, which meer living in the Parish, or comming to Church doth not fignisie.

ties which I have had, to know all their peo-

ple, or the most.

And now if all these are fit to go for Christians, then must we make a new kind of Christianity; and a new Gospel, and a new Christ. And if all these are fit to be Churchmembers, then we must make a new kind of Churches?

And why then may not those be Christians and Church-members, that never heard of the Name of Christ, as well as many of these?

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2. By this untried Entrance of all forts into our Churches, we bring a dishonour on the very Christian Name, and so on the Lord Jesus himself, and on his Gospel and holy waies. Christianity is not a matter of meer Opinion: Christ came not into the world only to perswade men to have high thoughts of him, but to save his people from their sinnes, and to destroy the works of the Devil. And when the Church of Christ shall be turned into a den of thieves, or a fly of swine, what a great dishonour is it to the Lord? As if we would perswade the world, that his fervants are no holier then others, and differ but in an Opinion from the world. Christ needeth not Disciples, and therefore will not take in all that refuse to come upon his terms; but hath fixed his terms, and will have only those that will yield to them. Though I abhorre the rigor of the contrary extreame, that would make the Church narrower then it is, and pinne it up in so small a number, as would tempt men to doubt of Christianity it self; and teacheth men to exclude their bretheren, meerly because they are themselves uncharitable Judges, when they are notable to disprove their Profession; yet must I also detest this horrible dishonouring of the Lord, as if his Body means of Reformation and Acconciliation. 107

were no better than the army of the Devil. 3. And by this means the Heathens, Jews, Mahometans and all Infidels are exceedingly hindred from believing in Christ; when they can fay as the Turks, when men question their fidelity; what? dost thouthink I am a Christian? He that knows any thing of Religious affaires, knoweth that commonly the first thing that draweth men to any party, is the liking of the Persons and their Practices; from whence they grow to enquire with inclination into their doctrines, The Ancient Christians that lived before the daies of Constantine, did bring Christianity into reputation by their Holiness, and God was then more eminently feen among them. But when the countenance of the Emperour, and worldly advantages had drawn in all men to the Church, and the Bishops did set the door too wide open, Christianity lookt like another thing, and that inundation of wickedness overspread the Church, which Salvian and so many more complaine of. Our likeliest way to win the Jews, and all Infidels to the Church, is by shewing them the true Nature of Christianity in the Church-members.

4. Hereby also we consound the ancient Order of Catechumens, or Expellants with M 4

the true members of the Church, and lay the Church and the perch, yea and the Church-ward, if not the commons, all together. By which also our Preaching and Administrations are confounded : fo that whereas the Ancient Churches had their Common Sermons (and some Prayers) which were fitted to the unconverted or Expectants; and had also both Doctrine, Praiers, Praises, and other worship, proper to the Church (especially on the Lords Daies) we must now speak to all, and joyn with all; and the Church, and the Enemies of the Church must fing the same Praises, as if they were one body. And God is not the God of confusion but of order in the Churches. He that put two forts of Preaching and Do-Arine into the Apostles Commission, Matth. 28. 19, 20. One for making Disciples and another for the edifying and guidance of Disciples, did never intend, that these should be confounded.

5. And then by this means, the Souls of millions of poore people are deprived of the great benefits of the Ordinances and Administrations suitable to their state. The begetting Word goeth before the feeding, strengthning Word, even before the milk for babes. The laying of the foundation

must go before our building thereon. Every one will thrive best in his Own Element and place. A fish will not prosper on dry land, nor a man under water. The womb is the only place for the Embrio and unborn child, though not for those that have seen the Sun. If you will break the shell before the Chicken be harche, that you may hasten its production, or honour it with a premature affociation with the rest that see the Sunne, your foolish charity will be the death of it. And so deale abundance of miltaken Zealots with the Souls of men; who cry out against the wisest and most conscionable Ministers, as if they were unchristning the People, and undoing the world, because they would feed them with food convenient for them, and will not be such hasty midwives, as to cast the mother into her throws, if not rip her up, that shee may have the child at her breasts, which should yet be many daies or moneths in the womb. Moreover they thus eause our people, to lose all that benefit of preparations, and folemn Engagement to Christ: of which more anon among the Bene fits.

6. By this means also the Souls of our poor people are deluded, and they are made believe that they are Christians when they

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are not, and in a state of Salvation, when

Mr Toorndicke, fee Dr Hannond's Pra-&tic. Catech. lib. 2. \$. 2. p. 103. & l. 6. \$. 2. pag. 311, 313, 314, 319, 320, 321, 322, 323, &c. it's no such thing. As Mr Thorndicke saith (as aforecited) No man is to be admitted to the Assemblies of christians) till there be sust presumption that he is

of the Heavenly Ferusalem that is above: ___ And admitting to, and excluding from the Church is, or englit to be a just and Lawfull presumption, of admitting to, or excluding from Heaven: It is morally and legally the fame act that entitleth to Heaven, and to the Church, that maketh an heir of life Everlasting and a Christian: - And if so, then whar greater mischief can we do the Soul of an ungodly man, then so to delude him, by our admitting him into the Church, and make him believe he is in a state of Salvation, when it's no fuch thing ? False faith, and false hopes, are the things that fill Hell, and are the common undoing of the world: And all that ever we can do is too little to cure it. When I bend all my trudies and labours, but to make a wicked man know that he is wicked, I cannot procure it. I can make him believe that he is a sinner, but not that he is an unconverted, ungodly figner, and in a state of

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Condemnation. O the power of blinding felf-love! that will not suffer them to see themselves miserable, when they see themselves sinfull, and all because they would not have it so; when yet it's most visible to others. And shall we all joyne to strengthen this potent Enemy? and lay this snare, and thrust men headlong into Hell, that are running down hill so saft already: and all under pretence of Charity and Compassion?

7. We shall put them by this means into a way, not only of losing the fruit of Ordinances, but of misapplying all to the increasing of their deceit: When we preach Peace to the true believer, the wicked will misapply it, and say, it belongs to them: When we speak against the unbelievers and ungodly, they'l think that this is not their part, but bless themselves because they are Christians. In our praises they are tempted with the Pharisee to thank God, and perhaps for mercies which they never had, as Justification, Adoption, Sanctification, &c. The Sacraments by misapplication will confirm them in Presumption. And thus as they enter by deceit, among Adult believers, fo will they turn all the Ordinances of God, and the Priviledges of the Church to feed that deceit, more effectuall then among the expectants pectants it would have been.

8. But the greatest mischief that troubleth meto think of, is this; that by this haftening and admitting all the unprepared into the Number of Adult Christians, and members of the Church; we do either put a necessity upon our selves to throw away Church-difeipline, or else to be most probably the damnation of our peoples Souls, and make them desperate, and almost past all hope. or remedy. I must confess, that what I am faving now, I was not fenfible of, till lately that experience made me sensible: While I medled not with Publike reproofs or cenfures, I disputed of these things, without that experience, which I now find is one of the greatest helps to resolve such doubts; which makes me bold to tell the Church, that the Practice of so much Discipline as we are agreed in, is a likelyer way, to bring us all to agreement in the rest, then all our Disputings will do without it : And that I refolve hereafter, to take that man for an incompetent Judge, and unmeet Disputer about Church-discipline, that never exercised it, or lived where it was exercised: And I shall hereafter suspect their judgments, and be almost as loath to follow such, as to follow a fwimmer, that never was before in the wacer, or a Pilote that was never before at fear or a Souldiour that never faw warres before, but have only learned their skill by the Book. Our case stands thus: If we take all our Parishes according to the old Church-constitution, to be particular Churches, and all the Parishiones to be members, then either we must exercise the Discipline which Christ hath commanded, or not. If not, then we disobey our Lord and Master, and own such a Church, as is utterly uncapable of Churchends, and consequently of the essence, seeing that it is a Relative being. For it's supposed that it is not for any unusual accident, that we cannot exercise this Discipline, but from the very Church conflitution, or incapacity of the matter. And then I. We shall be Traitours to Christ, under the name of Pastours, if we will wilfully cast out his Ministerial, Kingly Government. 2. We shall betray the Church to licentiousness. And 3. We shall set up a new Church-way, which is contrary, to that which hath been practised in all ages, from the Apostles daies, till Impiety had overspread the Christian world. He that dare take on him to be an Overseer and Ruler of the Church, and not to overfee and rule it, and dare settle on such a Church state, as is uncapable of Discipline. is so perfidious to Christ, and ventureth so boldly, to make the Church another thing, that I am resolved not to be his follower.

But if we shall exercise the Discipline of Christ upon all in our ordinary Parishes, what work shall we make? I will tell you what work, from so much experience, as that no reasonings can any more perswade me to believe the contrary, then that wormwood is not bitter, or snow not cold.

municate, or reject that it will make the sentence grow almost contemptible by the commonness. 2. We shall so extreamly enrage the spirits of the people, that we shall go in continual danger of our lives: Among so many that are publikly reproved, and cast out, it's two to one, but some desperate villains will be studying revenge. But all

This is no dishonour to the Discipline: for we find it hath great effect on such as are capable of it. this is nothing: but that which sticks upon my heart is this: 3. We shall be the cruellest enemies to the Souls of our poor people in the world: and put them the very next step

to Hell. For as foon as ever we have rejected them, and cast them, under publique

shame, they hate us to the heart, and either will never heare us more, or heare us with fo much harted and malice, or bitterness of spirit, that they are never like to profit by us. If you say that doubtless Discipline will have better fruits, if it be an Ordinance of God: I Answer 1. It's no time now in the end of the world, to question whether that be an Ordinance of God, which Scripture speaks for so fully, and so plainly; and which the Catholike Church hath fo long practifed, and that with such severity as it hath done. 2. I know the Discipline is of excellentule, and is likely to have excellent effects: But upon whom? Upon such as are fit to come under Discipline, and with fuch I have feen the usefulness of it: but with the rest it makes them next to mad. They that before would patiently hear me, in the plainest, sharpest Sermons that I could preach, and would quietly bear any private admonition, when once they are publikly admonished and east out, are filled with the gall of malice and indignation, and never more likely to profit by a Sermon Nay they fer themselves with malice, to reproach and oppose, and thir up others; and fall into any party, that will receive them that are enenties to il Ministry: so that I looke upon fome

fome of them, when once they are cast our, almost as if they were already in Hell: For they are desperately hardened against any surther means of their recovery. 3. Yea I am perswaded, that if we exercise Christs Discipline according to the Scripture Rule, upon all in the Parishes in England, it would endanger a rebellion; and the rage of the people would make them ready, to take any opportunity to rise up against the Soveraigne Power, that doth maintaine and protect us; and if we were not protected, we should some have enough of it.

Object. Perhaps you'l say, that publike adminitions, and Church consures are not to be easily exercised, nor upon any but notorious, seandalous sinners, and that in case of ob-

Amate impenitency.

Aufw. I am as much against a rash, unnecessary gensure, or use of the severity of Discipline, as another: I know that a sly must not be killed with a beetle. Let it be exercised but according to the Parliaments Ordinance, called The form of Church Government, to be used in the Church of England and Ireland, Aug. 29, 1648. Or let it be exercised but with one half, or the sixth part of the severity of the Ancient Canons of the Church, and you shall certainly see the effects that

that I tell you of. Do you think to use it but with few, when Impenitent, seandalous finners are so many? But perhaps you think to use it only in terrorem or now and then one, and let others alone that are in the same case. But 1. That's the same disobedience to God, as to use it upon none at all. He that hath commanded us to reject a Heretick, to have no company with the difor " derly livers, to turn away from scandalous, ungodly men, and not to enter with drunkards, railers, &c. hath not bid us do thus by some but by all. 2. God condemneth partiality. 3. Your Partiality will presently be so noted by men, that it will turn to your reproach, and make both you and your Discipline odious, when they can say, He cast out one, and forbeareth others in the same cale.

Object. But Were there not more offendors then the incestuous man at Corinth? And get

Paul cafteth out but him.

Answ. 1. How can you tell how many Paul cast out? 2. Doth he not give the Church a flat command to cast out and avoid the rest, 1 Cor. 5. 11, 12. When will you make us believe, that Paul at that time commanded them to do that which he would not have them do? 3. Corinth had many offendours.

fendours, whom Paul in that Epifle reprehendeth: but can you prove that any of them were obstinately Impenitent, after admonition? I know you cannot.

But perhaps you'l think that you should by the preparatory, private admonition so bow them, and work upon them, that sew of them should be so obstinate as to fall under

censure.

I answer, You speak this because you never tried, and know not the world. I must presume to tell you (though to tell you the reasons be unmeet) that there's but sew men in England must expect more advantages for Interest in their people, then I have in mine: and yet all's nothing, when I come to exercise Discipline, and cross their selfish, sensual inclinations. Those that will tell me, they are beholden to me for their lives, yet will not heare me when I perswade them to any humbling consession. Those that cannot hide their sinne, will consess it, and commit it over and over: will you accept of their private Consession for Satisfaction.

I defire those that are overridgid and uncharitable in censuring others, not to extend these that will publickly flander their Neighbours, or be drunk openly every week or month, or swear every day. But many of them will not fo much as confess before a few Ministers or Officers of the Church, that they have finned, but will stand impenitently in it to the last. Let me intreat them withall the submissiveness and earnestness that I can, when one bath beat or flandred another, or in the like cases, if I would kneel to them, I cannot get many of them once (Hypocritically) to say, I am forry, or I did amis: And those that do fay fo, in a cold, Hypocritical, heartless manner, will joyne with it fuch bitter words, against the accuser or reprover, and snew such hatred to those that admonish them, that declareth their impenitency. If you have

complaints to more then I extend them: nor to take it as an occasion for the unchurching of whole Parishes, or any one particular person, without sufficient evidence. For I must profess that I meet with hundreds in my Farish, that I can comfortably hold Communion with, that fome men of strieter principles, or more censorious dispositions would reject: Yea, and I take abundance for truly goldy men, that are not noted for any eminency of Religion, perhaps their parties, or callings, or opportunites, being fucly as keep them much from the Knowledg of others.

fuclt extraordinary abilits, to melt and mollifie hardened finners, more then we have, you are the more unexcusably un-

faithful to God and man, that will not use them. And all are not so havey as to have your conquering parts. For my part I can fay in uprightness of heart, that I do what I can do, (abating those neglects which are the consequents of any frailty) and if I knew how to do more, I would, with study, preaching, conference, labour or estate; and yet with abundance I am not able to prevaile, fo much as to make them capable of Discipline. So that I see plainly by unquestiona. ble experience, that either we must have Churches without the Discipline of Christ, and be Rulers without Ruling it; or else we must utterly undo our people, body and Soul for ever, and plunge them into a desperare state, and make all our following labous in vaine to multitudes of them: Or else we must take another course, then to admit all our Parishes to Adult Church-membership, as was formerly done, without preparation, and fitness for such a state.

And yet in their blindness, Gentlemen, Ministers, and all that plead for common Church-membership, pretend to be charitable to the Peoples Souls, when they are exercising this grievous cruelty. It is just as if in Mercy to the schoole-boyes, you should fet them, that cannot read English, in the

highest

highest form, where they must make Ora-tions in Latine and Greek;, or esse be whipt: would they thank you for such advancement. It is as if you should put an ignorant unexercifed, cowardly Soldier, or one that is but learning to use his armes, into the front of the Battaile, for his honour: or as if you should prefer a Pupill to be a Tutour, or put a freshman in the Doctors chaire, or admit a new baptized Novice to be a Pastour of the Church, where the blood of the people shall be required at his hands; or as if to honour him, you should admit any common Marriner to the Pilots place, or any Apotheca. ry to play the Physician to other mens ruine, and his owne shame. If you set such Children on horsback, while you pretend their good, you will break their necks. No man is fafe out of his own ranck and place: If the Husbandman know that every fort of plants and graine, must have their proper soile and season, and the Gardner knoweth that feveral herbs and flowers, must be variously manured, or else they will not prosper, why should we be less wife in the Work of God? As Countrey Schooles are Semina-ries to the Academies, so the state of Catechumens or Expedients is the Seminary to the Church, and the state of Infant Church-

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membership, the Seminary to the state of the Adult, into which they must be seasonably and folemnly transplanted, when they are ripe and ready, and not before. Truly our mercifull haftlings do but yoake untamed bullocks, that are fitter to strive and tyre themselves then to plow; and do but saddle fuch wild, unbroken colts, as are liker to break their own and their riders necks, then to go the journy which they are defigned for. In the state of Expectants, these men may profit by Preparing Ordinances, and the feafon may come, when they may fitly be transplanted: But if we put them inter sideles that are infideles, among Actual Believers, and Adult Church-members that are not such, nor prepared for the station, we bring them under a Discipline which will exasperate them, and turn them to be malig-nant enemies, and undoe them for ever. The Disposition of the matter, must go before the Reception of the forme: For undifposed matter will not receive it. As the Operation followeth the Being, and the Dispofition, fo we must employ every person and thing, in such operations only, as their Being and Qualification is capable of, and fuited to. A due placing of all according to their Qualifications, is the chiefest part of

means of Reformation and Reconciliation. 183

our Government. Misplace but one wheel n your watch, and try how it will go Is any person or thing be not good in his Own place, he will be much worse out of in, it the place of his Superiour. Fire is better in the chimny then in your bed, or upon your Table: A good Cleark may make but a sorry Counseller; and a good Subject may make but an ill Magistrate: And many a man becomes the seat of a Justice, that would not become the Princes Throne. If you would not undoe mens Souls by a Discipline, which they cannot bear; let them stay in the Seminary of Expectants, till they are ripe for it.

Object. But how do the Churches of France, Holland, Geneva and Scotland, that have

exercised Discipline upon all?

Answ. 1. Must I be sent to another Nation to know that which I have made tryall of, and attained the certain knowledg of, at home? I was never in France, nor at Geneva, and therefore I know not what number of obstinate, impenitent, scandalous persons are there, nor how many that know who Jesus Christis, nor what a Christian, or a Church is: but I have been in England, and I partly know what store of these are there, and what using they will bear, and what not. 2. Either other Churches have such

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materials as our Parishes, or not. If not, their cause is none of ours: If they have, then either they exercise Christs Discipline on them faithfully, and impartially or not: If not, then they are not to be imitated by us in their negligence, unfaithfullness, or partiality. If they do, and yet do not undo the people, they have not such a people as ours, or essentially have other means to surther their ends.

Melancthon Epift. (Impref. Lugdun. 1647.) ad Dominicum Schleupnerum, faith. I. Quia in tanta multirudine vix pauci funt Christiani, 65 apti qui Sacramento fruantur, cavendum est ne vulgus invitetur ad prophanandum Corpus Domini.

Lege Calvin. Inflitut. lib. 4. cap. 12.

5. 1, 2. Zanch.
de Ecclesia. vol. 3.
fol. 123, 124, 134,
135. and others cited in the Presace
of my Reformed
Passor.

3. The truth is, as in France they are but a people gathered from among the Papifts, whose Church doth drink up most of the scumme; so the other Churches: I. Are too lamentably careless, partial, or defective, in executing their own Discipline: And if I should come to think it lawfull, to forbear the Execution of it upon nineteene, I should soone think it lawfull to forbear the twentieth: And then what should I think of Scripture, and the Ca-

nons of the universal Church. 2. By this neglect

neglect it is, that Reformed Churches have contracted the greatest dishonour that is upon them, while they are found in Doctrine, and have Learned Pattours, able to confound the Romish adversaries; but alas, too many unmeet Church-members. 3. They have (-and Scotland had till lately) the Magistrates Sword to drive men on, and force them to submit to Discipline, which is not our case, nor was the case of the Primitive Church. It is not there the Churches censure that doth the work, but the Magistrates Sword, no more then it was with our Bishops in England. 4. And yet what work a little exercise of Discipline made, may appear in the case of Calvin, at Geneva, when for fulpending the Sacrament, when the people were in enmity, he was banished Geneva, and their dogs called by the name of Calvin; and when the suspending of one Bertelerius could put them all into such a flame.

Object. But fiat Justitia & ruat calum: let u trust God with His owne Ordinances: we must do our duty, what ever come of it?

Answ. This doth but beg the Question: Gods Ordinances are not for destruction, but edification; at least as to the multitude of the ungodly, they tend to their Conversion.

sion, and not to their perdition. Is that likely to be Gods Ordinance, which certain experience telleth us, will put such multitudes of men into a hopeless case, or next to hopeless? Ministers are appointed to make Disciples, and gather men to Christ, and further their Conversion, and not plunge them into a remediless state, and to hurry them all unprepared into Church-communion, that they may be thrust out againe, and brought to hate the Church. It's anothers work to advance them to the Pinacle of the Temple, that he may cast them down headlong. And I yet never knew the man, nor faw his face, that practifed what this Objection pleads for; and exercised Discipline, faithfully on a whole Parish. Nor do I believe that any man can do it that would; unless the Magistrate do it for him. For he cannot do it without the peoples consent: and if he fentence such to be avoided by the people, they will despise his sentence, and hold communion with them the more, and do as our Drunkards do, when one of their Companions is put in the flocks, bring him Ale and good cheare, and eat, and drink, and make merry with him, if the Magistrate restraine them not.

Object. But Excommunication must not be ned. means of Reformation and Reconciliation. 187

used, till all other remedies will do no good: and when all will do no good, what good will it do

such to be kept under other means?

Answ. To do good, for the bringing a man out of that sinne, for which he is admonished, is one thing, and to do good, for his Information and Conversion in the maine, is another thing; It is the use of Discipline, to cure men of the particular finnes that they are reproved for, rather then to convert them from a state of wickedness in general. 2. Nor is Excommunication to be deferred, as long as there is any Hope by other meanes; but only till we have used other means in vaine, for such a season as is meet; that the ends of Discipline be not frustrate. For else there should never man be Excommunicated: For there is some Hope that preaching against his sinne may do him good at last; though he come drunk to the Lords Table twenty years together, you cannot fay that his Conversion is Impossible: And yet we must not hereupon deferre the casting out of such a member. But in his Expeltant state, or among the Catechumens, we may beare with him lawfully in his wickedness, without excluding him from among our hearers, and if he heare us feaven years and seaven in vaine, there is vet some Hope of his Conversion, while he

waiteth in his own place and way.

And yet I yield this much to the Objectours freely, that when fit persons are taken into the Church, (yea or unfit, by negligence) we must wait with all patience that is consistent with the ends of Government. and cutting off must be the last remedie: and that when it is necessary, it must be used, though we see that it's ten to one, it will plunge the person (occasionally) into a worse condition. For the Publike Ends of Discipline, (the credit of Christianity, the preservation of the Church, and abundance more) are to be preferred before the good of that mans Soul: and as pana debetur Reipublica, and we cur not off malefactours for their own good, so much as the Commonwealths, which by their hurt must be promoted, so is it as to the Church. But this must be done but upon a few, for example: and therefore but few that will need this feverity, are supposed to be in our Communion. And I cannot believe that way to be of God, that would bring such multitudes into this miserable state.

Object. Your very keeping them from the Communion of the Church, and not Approving or Confirming them, would as much exasperate them.

Answ. It's no such matter. Much it may, but not neare so much, as I certainly know by experience: Those not Admitted heare with Hope; but to the rejected I speak as almost hopeless, except such as were sit to live under Discipline, on whom it may have its due effect.

9. And by this admitting all men without tryal and Confirmation, to come unobservedly into the state of Adult-Christians, we breed and feed continual heartburnings against the Ministers of Christ; while we are necessitated to do our work upon such unprepared Souls. And how much the hatred and contempt of Ministers doth conduce to the destruction of the people, Satan is not ignorant, that is the diligent promoter of it.

own studies, and Ministerial Labours, to abundance of our people. Partly by deluding them actually, in the Reception of them among Christians, that really are no Christians, and partly by this provocation of

their hatred.

abundance of Controversies in the Church For when once we displace any parts of t frame, we shall find almost all in pieces, a one errour draweth on so many, that Controversies grow numerous, and will never be reconciled by meere words and writings, till we actually set the Church in joynt

againe.

Ordinances of God, to a continual prophanation, while abundance that know not who Christ is, nor what Christianity is, are admitted as Christians, to our Christian Communion: and so themselves are involved in more sinne, and Gods own Worship turned into Provocation; so that we may seare lest God should frown upon our Assemblies, and withdraw the tokens of his Presence, and deny his blessing to those prophaned Ordinances. Though the innocent may still have their share in the blessing, yet may the Pastours and the guilty majority, deeply suffer by this great abuse of holy things.

13. By this means also it is that so many Scruples are cast in our way, about Administrations, and reception of Ordinances; and the comfort of Ministers and people in

them, is much abated.

Conversion of many sects about us, and of many ungody ones among us, who if they saw the primitive holiness of Churches

Churches might be drawn in.

munion of Saints, and turneth it to another thing; when this Holy Communion is fo much of our duty and our comfort, and such

a Representation of Heaven it self.

16. And if it be not a practical denial of some of the Articles of our Faith, it's well. We say there, that we Believe the Catholike Church to be Holy, and that it is a Communion of Saints, that is by the parts of it, to be exercised. And shall we deny this in our works, which in words we prosess.

17. By this means also we dishonour the work of Reformation, when we hinder the fruits of it, that should be visible to the world; and make men believe that it lieth but in a change of bare opinions. They that fee no great difference between the Reformed and the Romanists in their lives, will think it is no great matter, which fide they are joyned to It's noted by some Protestant Writers, that when Luther opposed Popery in Germany, abundance of the common licentious people, that were weary of Popith Confessions, and Penances, did joyne with those that were truly conscientious, and dishonoured the Reformation by their lives, though they increased the number, and did

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the service as Erasmus his Gospeller, tha used to carry a bottle of wine, and Erasmus New Testament, with great brass bosses and when he disputed with a Papist, knock him about the pate with the Bible, and seconsuled him.

18. And by this means we give the Papifis more roome then they should have, to reproach our Churches, and glory comparatively of the Holiness of theirs. Though I know that their glory is exceeding unreasonable, and that our Impurities are no more to theirs, then a few boiles to a Leprosic; yet we do ill to give them so much occasion, as we do, who are ready to make the worst of all.

19. By this means also we leave all Sects, to quarrel with us, and dispute against us, even whether we be true Churches of Christ or not, because our Adult-profession and Covenant is no more express, and discernable, then it is. And though we have enough to prove our selves a Church, yet do we leave them under their temptations, and our selves under the obloquy. And indeed we perversly maintain our own dishonour, while we think it a condition to be rested in, if we can but prove our selves true Churches; when our Learned Divines do give as much to

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the Romanists themselves; though not as Papal, yet as Christian. A Leper is a true nan, and yet his cure is a thing to be decired.

nany well meaning people among us, to a langerour separation from us, and to fly from our Churches, as if they would fall on heir heads; and we too much harden those hat are already separated: and all because we will not yield to the healing of our own diseases, or will do little or nothing to proture it. I know these men have no just ground for their hard conclusions, and centures of us; but we have little reason to give them this occasion, and cast a stumbling-block in the way of so many precious Souls.

To what is here briefly thrust together, if the Reader will adde the twelve Reasons, in my Christian Concord, pag. 11, 12, 13, 14, and what's said in my book of Right to Sacraments, where these matters, or those that sustaine them, are handled more at large, I suppose he may easily be convinced, that the former Church-Governours, in England, have been lamentably negligent, and our Churches by their means are much disordered, and that the present Ministers should be more forward, and diligent,

and unanimous for the cure, and that the Magistrate, if he love the Church of Christ, and the Souls of men; should speedily afford his help, and all too little to remedy these great and many evils, which we have let in, by suffering such a loose, unobserved transition from the state of Insan Church members, or from Apostaey, into the number of Adult-members, without Approved Profession and Consistantion.

Prop. 20. So many and great are the Benefits, that would follow the general pra
Hice of this duty, of Trying, Approving
and Confirming (or Abfolying) all thof
that enter into the number of Adult Chri
stians, that it should mightily provoke al
Christian Mag strates, Ministers, and
People; to joyne in a speedy and vigorous
execution of it.

Ne excellent fruit of this Practice will be the great increase of Knowledge, and godlines, and the destruction of ignorance, and notorious impiety. This is an effect, most apparent in the Causes. When men are made to understand, that by the Law of God, seconded by the sommon consent

consent of the Church, and the most Learnled Godly Pastours, and (if it may be) by the Law of the Land; no man is to be reaccounted, or numbered with Adult-Chriflians, but those that make a sober, serious, understanding Profession of Christianity; renouncing the flesh, the world, and the Dewil, and not contradicting, and nullifying this Profession, by a wicked life; this will engage Parents, to teach their Children, and Children themselves to learn what Christianity is, when they cannot have the Name. for the honour, and the Priviledges of Chri-Aftians, without some Credible Appearance of the thing. For doubtles while Christianity is in credit, the same motives that now prevaile with the multitude to seeme Christians, and to desire the Baptism of their Children, will continue then, to make them defire to be numbred with Christians, when they are at age: and fo will provoke them to do that, without which they know they connot be esteemed Christians. And as it's now a common thing to be baptized in Infancy, so will it be then a common thing, for our young people to learn the Principles of Christianity, yea and to rerform their lives, (I hope with the most) when they understand, that elfe they must be taken to be no Christians,

Christians. And if it were but the making of the understanding Profession, and outside of Christianity, to be commoner among us. it would be a most precious fruit of our endeavours. But much more, when true Christianity it selfe, in the life and power of it, wou'd also be more common. As no doubt but it would: For the Knowledg of the Letter, is the way to the receiving of the Spirit: & among multitudes that have the outside of true Religion, there will be far more. that have the life and soule of it, then among those that have not so much as the outside. Any man in reason may foresee, that if we be openly agreed, and it be publikely enacted, or declared, that none be taken into the number of Adult Christians, nor admitted to their Priviledges, till they have made an Approved Profession of Christianity, and fo be received by Jesus Christ himself, acting by his Ministers, it will set all that care for the Name, or hopes or Privilidges of Christians, to learn, and be, and do, that which they know will be so required of them. Whereas, as things go now in most places, they may bring their Children to Baptism, without understanding what Baptism is; and those Children may slide into the state of the Adult-Christians, and possess the Name, and

lace, and outward Communion, and other conours and Priviledges of such, without nowing whether Christ were a man or a wonan, or who he is, or what business he came bout into the world: And when no outward lecessity is laid upon them by the Church, o know more, or to seem better, no wonder if so many Heathens do sit among Christians, and if the multitude looke not much

fter knowledg or Godliness.

2. And moreover it will be a very great elpe to their Consciences, in order to the onvincing them of their sinne and misery, nd of the insufficiency of that Condition which multitudes do now rest in; and so to waken them to look after a safer state, and o be what they must seem to be; if they will be taken to be Christians. It is a great help to the deceiving of the multitude of the ungodly, to be currantly esteemed Christians, when they are not: And felf-love is fuch a blinding thing, that a little help will go farre with it, in the promoting of such deceits. Naturally men are very easily brought to think well of them selves, and hardly brought to confess their misery. Every man almost will easily confess himself a sinner, and a very great sinner, so you will but allow him to be a Christian, and a pardened sinner. For

this is a common confession, and brings no very terrible Conclusion, and message to the Soul. But when a man must confess himself no true Christian, but unsanstified, unpardoned, and a flave of Satan, this is as much as to confess himself in a state of damnation. in which if he die he is lost for ever and men are hardly drawn to believe so terrible a Conclusion: when yet it is so necessary where it is true, that we can scarce imagine how a man can be faved without it. He that knoweth not himselfe to be out of his way, will hardly be perswaded to turne back: And he that knows not himself to be unpardoned, will hardly value or feek a pardon : And he that thinks he is sanctified, and a true Chriflian already, will feek to be made what he takes himself already to be. And how much Reputation doth, to help or hinder men, even in felf-judging, is cafily perceived. Now here is a threefold Reputation, of very great moment, to concurre, either for mens Deception, or Conversion. 1. The Repui tation of Prince and Parliament, and fo of Law-givers and Rulers of the Nation, who by their Laws do manifest, whom they esteem good Christians, and this the people very much look at. 2. The Reputation of all the Pastours of the Church, which is to e manifested in their Agreements, Confesions, or Declarations and Practices. 3. The ommon consent of Christian people, which to be manisched by their actions, accoring to the Laws of Christ, and the Directin of their Guides. If Magistrates, Ministers nd people do concurre, to repute all the Infiels, and utterly Ignorant, wicked men mong us to be Christians, how many thouand Souls may this deceive, and undo for ver? Whereas, If Magistrates, Ministers, ind People that feare God, would all agree according to the Laws of Christ, to effect none Adult-Christians, but those that by a Credible Profession of Christianity, do seem to be fuch, it would abundantly help to convince them of their misery, and the need of Christ and Grace, and the absolute necessity of a change. We see even among good men, n the case of a particular sinne, how much common Reputation, doth help to hinder the work upon their Consciences: Among the Reformed Churches beyond the Sea, what Conscience is troubled for these actions, or omissions on the Lords Day, which in England would much trouble men of the some temper in other things. Among several Sects it troubleth them not, freely to revile the Servants of Christ that are against them, because

because they finde it rather go for commendable, then much condemnable, by thosewhom they most esteem. Among the Papilts, the believing in a Vice Christ, and the worshiping of his Image and Cross, with Divine Worship, and also the consecrated Host, and the condemning all the Churches of Christ that do it not, do goe for Virtues, and Christian Practices, though they are most haynous, odious sinnes; and what is it but common Reputation of Princes and Priests, and multitudes of people, that could make fo many, yea and fuch persons as some of them are, to continue in such sinnes, as if they were a part, yea an effential part of holiness, and one generation to succeed another in them. Were these sinnes but commonly reputed to be as odious as indeed they are. what a change would it make on millions of Souls? So that it's strange to see the power of Reputation.

3. Moreover, this course would be an excellent help to the Labours of the Ministers of Christ, for mens Salvation. They would better understand and apply our Sermons: whereas now; they lose the benefit by misapplying them. Now we must labour all our lives; (and with most, in vaine) to make unbelievers, and ungodly persons understand

derstand what they are, and no means will serve to convince many people, that they are not truly Christians, that know not what it is to be a Christian, or that hate it and fight against it. When they all go together under the name of Christians, what ever comforts they hear offered to Believers, they take them to themselves, or mistake them as offered to them; and all the threatnings that are uttered against unbelievers, they put by and think it is not they that they are spoken against. But if once we could but get men to stand in their own places, and to know themselves; how easily then would our mesfage work? Me thinks the Devil should not be able, to keep one man of an hundred in his power, if they knew themselves to be in his power; nor one of an hundred, in a state of ungodliness and condemnation if they knew that they are in such a state. At least, I am sure men will not so numerously, nor easily runne into Hell, when they know they are going into it, as when they are confident that they are good Christians, and in the way to Heaven.

4. If this foredescribed Confirmation be practised, it will more powerfully oblige our people to Christ, then a secret sliding into the number of Adult-Christians will do.

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And doubtless solemn engagements and obligations, have some force upon Conseience, to hold men to Christ, and restraine them from sinne: or else Baptism it self would be much frustrate; and the Jews should not have been so often called by Moses, Joshua, Asa, and other Princes, to renew their Covenant with God. But with us, men feel no such bonds upon them. And many question whether they are bound at all, by their Pa-

rents promises for them in Baptism.

5. The profiting of our people will be much greater in their own place: when those that are not yet fit for Adult-membership, and Priviledges, are kept in the place of Catechumens or Expectants. Every thing doth thrive and prosper best in its own place: If you teare them not out of the Churches wombe, till they are ready for the birth, they will prosper there, that else may perish. Your Corne will best prosper in the cold earth, where it feems to be dead and buried, till the Springing time shall come. And you should not violently unhose the cares, till Nature put them forth. The first digestion must be wrought, before the second, and Nature must have time allowed it, and the stomack must not too hastily let go the food, if you would have good sanguisigation

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cation and nutrition follow. Men think they do a great kindness to grosly ignorant, or impious men, to take them into the Church before they are capable of fuch a station, and the work or Priviledges thereto belonging: but alas, they do but hurry them to perdition, by thrusting them out of the state, where they might have thriven in preparation to a Church-state, into a state which will set them abundance of work, which they are utterly unfit for, and under the pretence of benefits and Priviledges, will occasion abundance of aggravations of their finnes. A boy in his A. B. C. will learne better in his own place, among his fellows, then in a higher form, where he hath work fet him, which he is uncapable of doing.

6. By this means also Church-Discipline will attain its Ends; It will awe and preserve the Church, and terrific, and reduce offendours, and help them to Repentance, and preserve the order of the Church and Gospel; when it is exercised upon such as are capable of it; that know the nature of it, and either are habitually diposed to profit by it, or at least understand, what it was that they were engaged to, and understandingly consent to live under such a Discipline: and when it is exercised upon sew, and we have

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not such multitudes to sweep out of the

7. By this means, both Church-affociations, and Ordinances may attaine their Ends; and people will be capable of doing the duty of Christians to one another, when others are capable of receiving it. Church-members are bound to exhort one another daily . While it is called to day, lest any be bardened by the deceitfullness of sinne, Heb. 3. 13. and to teach and admonish one another. Col. 3. 16. But before swine, we must not cast such pearls, nor give that which is holy to dogs, Matth. 7. 6. Therefore it necessarily followeth, that dogs and swine should be kept one of the Church, and cast out if they be crept in. Nothing hath more destroyed that Charitable Community, which should be among the members of the Church, and that loving and relieving Christ in Church-members, then the crowding of such into the place, as indeed are Satans members, and appeare not capable of that special Love, nor are capable of returning it to others.

8. This will make easy the Ministers work, and free him from abundance of hatred, trouble, and disadvantage, when like a workmans tooles in his shop, that all are in their place, and so at hand when he should,

use them, so his Hearers are in order, and each one lookes but for his portion, and none are snatching at our singers, for the Childrens bread, that belongs not to them, and men be not drawn to hate and raile at Ministers, for not sullfilling their defires.

9. By this means also, the Ordinances will be more purely administred, agreeably to their Nature, and the Institution: And so God will bless them more to his Church, and own his people, with the fuller discoveries of his presence, and take pleasure in the As-

femblies and fervices of his Saints.

of the Saints, (and the holy Ordinances of God) will be abundantly more sweet to his Servants, when we have it in the appointed way, and it is not imbittered to us, by the pollutions of Infidels, and notorious ungodly men. Though yet I know, that in a negligent polluted Church, Gods Servants may have their fhare of comfort, in his Ordinances, when they have done their own duty for Reformation, without success.

11. By this means the Church, and the Christian Religion will be more honorable in the eyes of the world, who judge by the members and professours lives, before they can judge of the thirg as in it self: And as

Christ

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Christ will be thus bonoured, and the mouths of adversaries of all forts stopped, so it will do much to further their Conversion, when they have such a help to see the beauty of the Church and Christian Fatth. Many more such benefits I would name, but that you may gather some of them, from what was said of the contrary incommodities: Only I adde

12. Lastly, it is a way that is admirably fuited both to Reformation, and Reconciliation; to Unity, as well as Purity: which removeth many of the Impediments, that else would trouble us in the way. For as all wicked men will agree against it, as they will against any holy practice, so all parties confiderable among us, do in their doctrine and professions owne it; and it will suit the Principles, or the Ends of all that fear God, either wholly or very farre. I shall here diflinctly shew you, 1. That the Episcopal: 2. Presbyterians: 3. Independants: 4. Anabaptists: 5. Yea and I may put in, the Papifts themselves, have no reason to be against this practice; but all of them have great reafon to promote it, supposing them to be what they are.

1. That it is so far agreeable with the Doctrine of the Church of England, that our Episcopal party have reason to be for it, appeareth: 1. By the Rubricke, The rest of the for Confirmation, in the Common-Prayer Book, which saiter.

Saith as followeth, The Cu-

rate of every Parish, or some other at his appointment . Shall diligently upon Sundaies and Holydaies, halfe an houre before Evening-Prayer, openly in the Church, instruct and examine so many Children of bis Parish, fent unto him, as the time will serve, and as be Ball think convenient, in Some part of this Catechism, And all Fathers, Mothers, Masters, and Dames, Shall cause their Children . Servants , and Prentices (Which bave not learned their Catechism) come to the Church at the time appointed, and obediente ly to hear, and be ordered by the Curate, until such time as they have learned, all that is appointed here for them to learn And when-Gever the Bishop shall give knowledg, for Children to be brought before him, to any convenient place for their Confirmation, then shall the Curate of every Parish, either bring, or send in writing, the names of all those Children of his Parish, which can say the Articles of the Faith, the Lords Trayer, and the ten Commandements, and also how many of them can answer to the other Questions, contained in thie this Catechism. And there shall none be admitted to the Holy Communion, till such time as he can say the Catechism, and be Construed.

So that you see we must not admit any, but the Confirmed to the Sacrament. And I suppose in common reason, they will extend this to the Aged, as well as unto Children, seing ignorance in them is more intollerable: And indeed the words themselves exclude the unconfirmed, and that cannot say the Catechism, from the Sacrament, of

The first part of the Rubricke anon cited, also proves this.

what age soever. 2. And I may take it for granted, that it is not bare saying the Catechism, that they expect, but also a Prosession that they

owne their Baptismal Covenant to God thee Father, Sonne, and Holy Ghost: And also that it be a Profession somewhat understood; and not barely to say the words which they understand not, as a Parot doth. And this I prove to be their meaning, (yea and also that they live a Christian life) from the Prayer in Confirmation, adjoyined, which is this; Almighty and Everlasting God, who hast vouchsafed to regenerate these thy Servants by water and the Holy Ghost, and hast given unto them forgiveness of all their sunes; strengthen

trengthen them, we beseech thee O Lord with be Holy Ghost the Comforter, and daily inrease in them the manifold gifts of Grace, the pirit of Wildom and Understanding, the Spiit of Counsell, and Ghostly strength, the pirit of Knowledg and true Godiness. So hat here you see that the Church of England poofeth all those that are to be Confirmed, have already the Holy Ghoft, and the pirit of Wisdom, Understanding, Counell, Knowledg, and true Godliness: which hey beg of God, as to an increase only for he Confirmed. And fure they do not think hat every notorious, ungodly man, hath ne Spirit of true Godlinels, if he can but fay he Catechilm; or that every ignorant person r Infidel hath the Spirit of Knowledg, Wilom, &c. as foon as he can speak the words hich he understands not. And in the folowing Prayer they say, We bave laid our ands on them, to certifie them (by this signe) f thy favour and gracious goodness towards hem. And sure they will not think to Certie men that know not what Christianity is, r that live not Christian lives, for this faour of God towards them, meerly because hey say the words which they do not underland. So that if they will but let men unerstand what they do, and make good what what is here expressed, we are agreed with them that stand for Common-Prayer, that such as are unconfirmed be not admitted to the Holy Communion. And as for the person Confirming, I shall speak to that anon.

De hoc diffidium nullum futurm Sperem, &c. De tempore Confirmationis, Video bonis viris utriusque partis non displicere, si ejus usus ad gtatem paulio adultiorem differatur, ut parentibus, susceptoribus, dy Ecclesiarum prefectis occasio detur, pueros de fide quam in Baptismo professi funt, diligentius instituendi dy admonendi. Georg. Cassander, in Consult. de Confirmatio-

2. I will next speake of the Papists, because in their words I shall have opportunity to recite some more of our Own. even those of the Canons Convocat. London, An. 1603. c. 60. I will pass by Frans. de S. Clara. and such Reconcilers, lest you fay, that is not the common Judgment of the Papists: And at this time it may suffice to instance in one, that most petulant, insolent Jesuite, Hen. Fitz Simon, in his Bri= tanomach. lib. 3. cap. 4.

pag. 289, 290, 291. Where he reciteth the words of our Canon, that seing it was a solemn, ancient, laudable custom in the Church of God, observed even from the daies of the Apostles, that all Bishops laying hands on those

those that were Baptized in Infancy, and are instructed in the Catechism of the Christian Religion, should Pray over them, and bless them, which we commonly call Confirmation, we will and ordaine that every Bishop, or his Sufragane, do in their proper person, diligently observe this right and custom, in their ordinary visitation. To which faith the Jesuite, What do I heare? - All this wery Orthodox, very Catholike, if uttered in good sadness -- And citing the Rubricke beforementioned, he mentioneth the Conference at Hampton Court, pag. 10, 11, 32, 33. That the Doctrine of Confirmation was part of the ipostles Catechism, rashly rejected by some Churches, but in Calvins Judgment to be taken up againe, and is ungrateful to the Purians only, because they may not themselves adninister it. And pag. 64. he would perwade us, that most certainly the Bishops porrowed this passage from the Rhemists Test. Annot, in Heb. 6, 2. against the Purians. More he adds from Resp. Oxon. ad Liel. Supplie. Covell, &c. and concludes, All bis the Formalistes (as he constantly calls hat party) do freely grant us, then which he Catholikes themselves, as to the sound of he words, seem scarce able to thinke, or speak ny thing more honsurable of Confirmation. And

And that you may see how farre he accepts also of Calvins concession, he doth with oftentation cite the words of Calvin, in Ast. 2. and Instit. lib. 4. cap. 19. §. 28. that It's incredible that the Apostles should use Imposition of hands, but by Chrsts Command: and that it was not an empty signe, and that it is to be accounted for a Sacrament. So that these two parties cannot be against us, in the matter of Consirmation, though I know that the Papists are against us, for laying by their ceremonies and abuse of it.

3. And as for the Presbyterians, they cannot be against it: For 1. The most eminent Divines of that Judgment, have written for it, of whom I could cite abundance: But Calvin, Hyperius, and others, cited by Mr. Hanmer already, sufficiently declare their desires, after the restoring of Consirmation: And Chemnitius a Lintheran is large for it, and others of that way. 2. And it is so clearly usefull and necessary to the Resorming of distempers in the Church, and the quiet of the Ministry, and the safe and successfull exercise of Discipline, that I know they will heartily consent to it.

4. And for the Congregational party, 1. Some of them have declared their Judgments for it, in the approving or promoting Mr. Han-

Ar Hanmer's Book. 2. And I have spoke with some of the most eminent of that mind, hat are for it. 3. And the solemn Covenant or Profession, which they require of II that enter among them, as Church-members, doth shew that they are for it in the ubstance, though how far they like, or listile the signe of Imposition of hands I know not. It is the want of this, that they are so much offended with in our Parish-Church, and therefore doubtless they will consent.

5. And For Anabaptifts, though we cannot expect their full consent, because they dmit not Infants into the Visible Church, and therefore Baptise those whom we Consirme or Restore, yet doubtless they will ike this as next to that which they suppose to be the right: and because we come as neare to them as is sit and lawfull for us to do, it is the likeliest way to abate their censures, and

procure with them for much Peace, as in reason may be expected, with men that differ from us in the point of Infant-Baptism. Three forts of them, I suppose we may meet with: I. Some that grant

Some few also there are, that are Antipadobaptists (against baptizing Infants) and yet not Anabaptists (as not judging it a Nullity, nor to be iterated) 214Confirmation & Restauration the Necessary

And these, one would think we might live at Peace with.

that Infants are Christs Disciples, Christian, and Vissible Church-members, but yet think that Bap-

tism is not for their admission, but only for the Adult. I confess I know of none so moderate, nor am I sure there are any such, but by hearsay, or conjecture: But if there be, our differences with these men would be most in the External figne. If they do but as much by Infants, as the express words of the Gospel do commend, and Christ chid his Disciples for opposing, that is, if they yield that they shall be offered unto Christ, and that the Minister of Christ do in his Name, Receive them, lay his bands on them, and bless them, because of such is the Kingdom of God; and then baptize them, when at age they make a personal Profession; and if we on the other side offer them to Christ, and the Minister in his Name accept them by Baptism, and at age confirm them, upon their personal Covenanting or Profession, the difference here would be most, that they change the outward figne, and they use Imposition of hands when we use Baptism, and we use Baptism when they use Impsition. And with such it were easy for moderate men to hold brotherly Love and Peace. 2. Some we shall

meet

neet with, that deny Infants to be Visible Church-members, and yet think the Infants f Believers, to have some promises more hen the rest of the world, or at least that hey are Candidati Christianismi, Expectants fa Church-state, and areas soone as they understand any thing, to be bred up as Catehumens in the Church seminaries, and to be Baptizd, as soone as they are actual Belicvers. And as far as I understand them, some of them will consent that they be offered and ledicated to God in Infancy, and folemnly eceived, by Ministerial Imposition of hands, nto the state of Expectants. If these men be of peaceable, moderate Spirits, and agree with is in other matters of Religion (in the subfance at least) they must needs acknowledg, hat in the foredescribed practice of Confirnation, we come so neere them, that they cannot deny us brotherly Love and Peace. For I hope they will not think, that they nay lawfully deny these (yea or their comnunion) to all that be not punctually of their opinion, against the Church-memberthip and Baptism of Infants. 3. And as for ill the rest of the Anabaptists, that hold also he doctrine of Pelagianism, or Socinianism, or Libertinism, or Familism, or Quakers, or Heathenism, they are not in a capacity

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for us, to treat with about Accommodation, or Christian Peace.

But yet, as to all the intemperate, dividing, unpeaceable Anabaptists, that will but reproach us for our drawing so neer them, at least we shall have this advantage against their reasonings, that we shall be far better able to manifest the variety of them, then otherwise we could do. For whereas their common Argument against Infant Baptism is, that it defileth the Church, by letting in all the Children in the Nation, which must be cast out againe, for the most will be openly vile; and that it defraudeth the Adult of the benefits of solemn Engagement to Christ; all this will be taken off by Confirmation, and will lie no more on us, then on themselves, seeing by this means, we can as faithfully hold the Church door against the Adult, that are unfit to enter into the number, as they can.

And here I shall intreat the moderate, godly persons among us, that are of the Episcopal, Presbyterian, Congregational, or Erastian Judgment, yea and the first and second fort of Anabaptists, to consider how neerly we are all Agreed, or how neer to an Agreement, when we are not aware of it, or live at such a distance, as if we were not

vare of it: And whether it be not our duty close upon this Practice, at least much earer then we are? It is a fad and fearfull ile, when men Professing Godliness, and I pretending to a Love of Unity . Peace and loliness, shall hate or oppose each other, nd separate from each other upon a pretence nat we differ in things that we are agreed in; nd when such shall perswade the common nemies, and the ignorant people, that we ffer where we do not: as if the Enemy had ot already matter enough of reproach aainst us, nor the ignorant matter enough f temptation and offence, but we must falfly ive them more, by seeming to differ when nere is no fuch thing. And if this be caused, y any mens hating their own Principles, then they fee them in anothers hand, or yet y hating the Practice of their own Princiles, I leave it to the confideration of fober nen, whether such are liker to the Ministers of Christ, or Satan.

Give me leave here a little, by way of Apolication, to review what I said concerning

our Accord.

1. How much many Brethren of the Epifopal Judgment, do censure other mens atempts, for Reforming their Congregations, s too open to be hid. But how little cause

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they have to be offended with any Moderate attempts, let their own forecited Principles be judge. I know that it is the Administration or Government of the Churches, that feems by the noise of Opposition among us, to be the greatest point of differences: But as far as I can descern, it is not so. The Constitution of our Curches is the great difference: It's a shame to speake it: we differ most where we are Agreed. I have so much experience of the minds of Godly Ministers. and private men in England, that I dare boldly say, would we but all Agree in Pra-&ice, in the constituting our Churches of due Materials, where for ought I know, we are almost all Agreed in Principles, there were no Probability, that all the rest of our disagreements, would keep us at a quarter of the distance as we are. Truly the common, honest, godly people, flick not much on the difference in formalities, and extrinfick modes of Government: If they heare a Minister pray heartily, preach foundly, judiciously and powerfully, live holily and righteously, and charitably, and beate down sinne, and set himself to promote true Piety, they are (commonly where I am acquainted) if not indifferent what form of Government he is for , yet at leat, can ea.

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fily beare with him, though he differ from them. Let us have the Work of God well done, and we shall care the less who it is that doth it. The greatest offence, that commonly is taken against Episcopacy is, 1. The former viciousness, negligence and persecution, that men of that way were guilty of; and 2 Because men know that a Diocesan Bishop hath so much work upon his hands, that he will certainly leave the far greatest part undone. So that the Question is not so much who shall do the work, as whether it shall be done or not.

But now if this Principle were Practised, in which we are Agreed, about Confirmation, or at least, a Publicke Profession, that fo our Churches might be constituted of fit materials, and not be peffered with fo many Infidels, or persons so Ignorant as that they know not Christ; or persons so notoriously vicious, as that they are openly bruitish and prophane, and make a very scorne of Honefty and Godliness, this would do much to heale all the rest of our Divisions. The Country knows, that the reason why the multitude of Ignorant, ungodly people are for Episcopacy, is principally because they think that Government will do as it did, and rather curbe the Precisians (as they call territ count them) them) then them, and will not trouble them with a Differencing discipline or administrations, nor urge them so hard to labour for Knowledg, and live a Godly life. Take away this conceit from them, by the faithfull practice of your own Principles, and they will hate you as much as others. What great satisfaction would you give to all that fear God among us, if you would Practife but that which the Rubricke of the Common-Prayer Book requireth of you, in this one point? For it requireth not only a Learning of the Catechism, but also a publike owning of their Baptismal Covenant in the face of the Congregation, and a solemn Promise to live a boly, obedient life: and this at full age; and after this they must be Confirmed, before they be admitted to the Sacrament of the Eucharist. That it may appeare how fully we are Agreed in this point, I shall transcribe some more of the Rubricke of Confirmation, which is as followeth.

The Reasons given, why none shall be Confirmed, till they can answer such questions of the Catechism, as they shall be apposed in, are these, I. Because that when Chridren come to the years of discretion, and have learned what their Godfathers and Godmothers promised for them in Baptism, they may them themselves

themselves with their own mouth, and with their own consent, openly before the Curch ratific and confirme the same; and also promise. that by the Grace of God they will evermore endeavour them elves, faithfully to observe and keep such things as they by their own mouth and confession have assented unto. 2. Forasmuch as Confirmation is ministred to them that be baptised, that by imposition of bands and prayer they may receive strength and defence, as gainst all temptations to sinne, and the assaults of the world and the Devil, it is most meet to be admitted, when Children come to that age, that partly by the frailty of their own flesh, partly by the assaults of the World and the Devil, they begin to be in danger, to fall into Sundry kinds of sinne. 3. For that it is agreeable with the usage of the Church in times past: Whereby it was ordained, that Confirmation should be ministred to them that were of perfect age, that they being instructed in Christs Religion, should openly Profess their own Faith, and promise to be obedient to the will of God.

This, with what was before cited shews, that in this main Point we are agreed with the Brethren of the Episcopal Judgment, and therefore may expect their concurrence: and to that end, we desire them to promote the Practice of their own Principles: and let us

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not leave the Work of God undone, while we ftrive who shall do it or rather who shall not do it. If the Canons allow the Bishops suffragane to do it, you may beare with others of the same order to do it, rather then leave it undone

2. And for the Presbyterians, I intreat them to Consider, 1. Huw much the faith. full practife of this duty, will put by all the offence and mistaking-reasons of the Erastians, who ask them so earnestly, how they can prove that people must be examined by the Minister, in order to the Lords Supper, any more then in order to a day of thanksgiving? I know it is an easy matter, to prove that a Pastour may call his People to private, personal Instruction, at any fit season; and therefore before a Sacrament when he fees just cause: and they are bound to obey him, ordinarily, by virtue of the general precept, Heb. 13. 17. Obey them that Rale over you, &c. But if you make this the season and use of your Examination, to admit menout of a state either of Catechumens, or Infant-members, into the number of Adultmembers, and never trouble them afterward with Examinations, unless upon some special occasion, or in your ordinary course of personal Instruction, this would put bythe oppolition

position of gainlayers; and I think, satisfied all of them that have any sober considerations and love to the prosperity of the Church.

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2. And confider also how much this way would facilitate your course of Discipline: you would be much more clearly satisfied. who are your Church members, and of your special charge, and on whom you are specially bound to exercise Discipline, and to whom you owe your special care and labour: and your people will be better satisfied then now they are, both of the quality, and regular reception of members, and who they be, to whom they owe the special Duty of members, and whom they are more specially bound to communicate their worldly goods in their necessity. How much uncertainty, confusion, diffatisfiedness and neglect of duty, remaineth in those Congregations, where this work is quite ommitted, is obvious to common observations.

3. And if any should have a jealousie of this designe, as seeming to set up the Congregational way of Covenanting, I intreat such to remember; 1. What an enemy to the Unity of the Church, and how unbeseeming a charitable Christian, a spirit of causeless jealousie is. 2. That it should be the more gratefull

gratefull to you, because it is acceptable to your Brethren: If you are Lovers of Unity and Peace, you will be far from avoiding a Practice, because those hold it with whom you would be united, that is, because it tends to Unity; but rather you will be glad of such a healing means. 3. Consider that it is no more the Congregational mens Principle, then the Episcopal, Presbyterians and the Erastians. It is our common Principle. let us therefore make it our common Praclice; an easy, a reasonable way of Agreement. The not Practifing of this . hath caft us into confusions; and the Practise of it must be it, that must restore our Church Order, and heale most of our Divisions. I know it is agreable to your Judgments. I move you not to forfake your Principles, but to Practice them. Do but enrol those only for your Adult Church-members, that are Confirmed, or Approve, upon a perfonal credible Profession, of true Christianity, and confent to live under your Ministerial Discipline; and it will do more, then you can eafily now apprehend, for an Union with your Brethren, and for the closing of the fad, and long-continued divisions of the Churches.

3. And to the Congregational Brethren , I

ay boldly say, it is a Practice so suitable your own Practice already, (though I inkit is a more Regular performance of it at I propound, then most have used) that reason we may expect your approbation id concurrence. Perhaps you'l feare that me of your Brethren may flubber over the ork, and make but a Ceremony of it: But may some of your Own mind, if they be ersonally remiss and negligent, as well as thers. And perhaps others will feare left on should use it over rigorously, and make it pretence for excluding many that are not to e excluded. But this will be according to he Prudence, and Charity of particular Palours; and is nothing to those Principles, in which we are all agreed. Only I beseech you the feare of God, take heed of giving just ecasion of this offence. Be not Righteous vermuch: Remember how tender Christ is of his litle ones: and how he is displeased with those that keep them from him: and will not break the bruised Reed : If he carry the Lambs in his armes, and gently drive those that are with-young, it beseemes not m to turn them out of the fold, or to disowne them. We are commanded to Receive him that is weak in the Faith, though not to doubtfull disputations, Rom. 15. 1, It's a coniunction

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junction of impiery, injustice and uncharita bleness, to thrust back those that Chris would have admitted. It's Impiety, to ro Christ of his Church-members, and diminic his Visible Flock, and wrong those whor he values as his Jewels, and is tender of, a the apple of his eye. It is great Injustice, t defraud men of their Due, in so great a mat ter as his Church priviledges and helps to Hea ven. Ic's greater Injustice, then to turi them out of their houses and lands; for th Benefits are greater. It's Uncharitableness to deale fo cruelly with us, in matters of fucl Consequence. And it's the greater, 1. Be cause it is none of our own, but our Master treasure which we deny them. 2. And be cause we are Conscious, if we are Christian indeed, of so much sione and unworthynes our felves, as should provoke us to deale the more tenderly and compassionately with others. I would not have you blind under pretence of Charity, nor to let in known swine, for feare of keeping out the sheep But remember that when the case is but so doubtfull and difficult, that you cannot know certainly the tares from the wheat, or cannot make a separation without a danger of pulling up the wheate with the tares, it's betrer let both alone till harvest. We will

not be wilfully guilty of mens Lying, or Hypocritical Professions: but if they be guilty of them, we may yet believe, that God hath much service for Hypocrites in his Church. And the number shall be some honour to him; and some encouragement to fome that are yet without, to draw neerer us. Though it be the Intention of Christ in Instituting his Ordinances, and the Intention of . the Church, that men be truly Penitent believers before they are Baptized (at age) or admitted into the number of Adult Church members, and to the Lords Table: and so never made the Eucharist an Ordinance which is Primarily and Directly intended for Consersion of the unregenerate, and which known ungodly men may feeke, and be admitted to, in order to their Conversion: (Bellarmin himself confessing hat such come into the Church prater intentionem Ecolefia) Yet Christ that knew abundance of unsound Professours would thrust themselves into the Church, hath provided those Ordinances there, which conduce much to their regeneration: And even the Lords Supper, though instituted primarily for another use, may be a means of this, to those that yet unworthily drew neer it. However, if we be commanded to invite, yearnd compel men

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to come in to the Church, that the house of Christ may be filled, we must not be too scrupulous in admitting them, nor to busy in keeping them back. If any where, it's here that Christ is like to say, Odi servum nimis diligentem. If men make a Credible Profession, I dare not refuse them: Nor dare I by my uncharitable Incredulity, take that for Incredible, which I cannot Prove to be fo. His Profession is the Evidence of his Title with the Church. If I will deny him when he feeks admittance, I must disprove that Profession, and shew it to be invalid. Truly much experience bath taught me, that many that were never commonly noted for Godliness, and that through bashfulness, or want of expressions, or the hinderance of carnal friends, and worldly affaires, have lived as strangers to those that are eminent for the feare of Cod, have yet at last, disclosed themselves to me, to have been humble, serious Christians many years, as far as I was able to judge. Especially take heed how you flight or reject people for want of parts, or gifts, or utterance. I have known excellent Christians, that through bashfulness are not able to give an account of their knowledg of the very fundamentals of Religion, to a perfon whom they much Reverence, and are in

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we of. And I meet with many ignorant people, that in answer to many of my Quetions do seem to be ignorant of Christ himself, who yet shew the contrary, when by other words, I have caused them better to understand me. If people be but desirous, and willing and diligent, it must be very gross Ignorance indeed, that must warrant us to refuse them. Many thousands are guilty of wrong intruding into the Church, when the Ministers and Church were not guilty of wrong admitting them, but had been culpable if they had resused them.

I speak all this to the Congregational Brethren rather then the rest, because they are most suspected to be overstrict in their admissions; and because I would intreate them, to avoid all just occasions of offence and disunion in their Practise, when we are all so happily agreed in our Principles, in this great point, of the Necessity of an Approved Pro-

fession.

4. And for the Erastians, as in the point of Discipline, they commonly contend with us upon a meer mittake, thinking we claime a proper Imperium, or Magisterial Power, when as we claime but the Power of an Embassadour, with such a kind of Power, as a Physician hath over his Patients, or as Plato

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or Zeno had in their Schooles, (besides th Ministerial Power in Worshiping) so thei Principal quarrel with us, will be remove by the Practice of Confirmation. You tal. much of the Sacraments being converting Ordinances, and against examining men in order to the Lords Supper, and keeping mer away. But are you not Agreed with us, that a personal understanding, serious Profession o Christianity, even of Faith, and Repentance (which conteineth a Renouncing the flesh, the world, and the Devil) is necessary to those that will (either by Baptism or Confirmation) be admitted into the Number of Adult-members of the Church? And do you not grant that the Adult, whether before Baptism or Confirmation, are to be tried and approved by the Pastours, before they Baptize them, or Confirm them? Grant us but this (and that the ancient Discipline should be exercised in the Church, which the Scriptures and all the Church Canons do record) and wee shall be agreed with you in a moment. For Baptism we are no Rricter then the Common-Prayer Book, that required that the party (by him felf or others) did Promise and vow I. To for sake the Devil and all his works, the Pomps and vanities of the Wicked World, and all the finfull is of ull lusts of the flesh. 2. To believe all the Arthe cles of the Christian Faith. 3. To keep Gods. Wely will and Commandements, and walk in the same all the daies of his life. That so, it ay be truly said of the Baptized, that he is ade a member of Christ, a Child of God, and non inheritour, (or heir) of the Kingdom of leaven: and of the Confirmed, we expect ut that which is here faid to be given and flured in Baptism , viz. A Death unto sinne, nd a New birth unto Righteousness; that being by Nature born in sinne, and the children of wrath, we are hereby made the Children of Grace: yea we expect but what is required of persons to be baptized; viz. Repentance wherey they for lake sinne; and Faith, whereby they tedfastly believe the Promises of God made to bem in that Sacrament. All these are the words of the Catechism in the Common-Prayer Book. Yea we expect but that open Profession before the Congregation, which the forecited Rubricke of Confirmation requireth: no nor alway fo much as that. So that I may well suppose, that no Godly, moderate man of the Eraftian way, can difsent from us in this point of Confirmation: And a Consent in this, will be next to a Confent in all, between us and them.

5. And for the Anabaptists themselves, Q4 though 232 Confirmation & Kestauration the Necessary

though we expect not their Consent, yet we the may well expect their Moderation, and nonopposition, and that as we thus draw as neer in them, as possibly (in our present judge t ment) we can, fo they would lay by all bitternels and reproach, and divilive carriage, and come as neer us as they can. And as now with the more moderate of them, our difference appeareth less then many of them imagined, fo it may appear, that the distance in affection and Communion shall be no greater then there is cause. The odium of Division, and unpeaceableness, hath so long laine upon their party, that methinks they should be willing to have it taken off. And there is no way to take it off, but their visible amendment; by becoming Lovers and Promoters of Union, Communion, and Peace among the Churches of Christ. Men will never take your opinion to be of God, while general experience shall shew them, that it will not stand with that Love, Union, and Communion of the Saints, but engageth almost all that receive it, in Divisions, Opposition, and Reproach, of the Servants of Christ and his Churches. Though you think your own Opinion right, let it not so farre disposses you of Charity, and Reason, as to unchurch all the Churches of Christ, that thinke distin

hinke otherwise, or to cast off Communion with the Godly, that are not of your Opinion; as long as we come so near you, as to take none into the Number of Adult Churchmembers, but those that are Confirmed, or Approved by Christs Ministers, upon their personal, credible Prosession of Faith and Holiness.

Lay all this together, and we may well conclude, that this Practice of Ministerial Approbation, and Confirmation, (or Restoration) of all that are admitted into the Number of Adult-Christians, or visible Church-members, and to their Priviledges. is so necessary, and so admirably fitted, both for Reformation, and Reconciliation, of the Episcopal, Presbyterian, Independants, Erastian and moderate Anabaptists, and to stop the mouths of the Intemperate, and of the Papists, that all Magistrates, Ministers and People, that love the Churches Purity and Peace, and long to see it clensed and healed, should gladly embraceit, and vigorously promote it it.

Have two things yet more to do upon this Subject. 1. To answer some Objections, and 2. To give some Directions to all forts, for the effectual putting it in execution. The Objections are these.

Object. 1.

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Object. I. You will tempt the Anabaptists to say, that this is but a shift of our own devising, instead of Baptism, lest we should yield to them, when we are convinced of the Necessity of a personal Covenanting by the Adult.

Answ. There is no Ordinance or Truth of God, that will not be spoken against by mistaking men: and yet we must not therefore cast them away. Nor is it the way to vindicate a Truth or Ordinance from reproach, to disclame it, and so to reproach it actually our selves. Nor is it the way to get advantage of an adversary, to fly fom him too far into the contrary extreame, but rather to come as neare him as the truth will give us leave. And to the Anabaptists Objection, we shall give them our reasons against their way, in a ficter place, and have already done it. We are most certain that the Servants of God of old (both with Circumfion and without it , Deut. 29.) did enter their children into Covenant with God, as well as themselves. And if it be the express Word of God, that both Infants and Aged should be entered and engaged to him in Covenant, we will obey his Word, and do both, though the Anabaptists will do but the one. He must have a hard face, that will deny that it was once the duty of Parents, to offer their

children to God, and enter them into Covenant with him: and when they have proved that this Duty or Power is recalled. (which I never yet faw done, no not in Mr. Tombes his last Voluminous Review)then we will forbeare it; but till then it is not mens talk and confident words, that must make a tender Conscience yield; to omit so great and plain a duty, or give up so great a Mercy as this is. I am fure that Infants were then no more able to believe themselves, nor enter themselves in Covenant with God then now: and I am fure the Parents by Gods appointment, did it for them, offering and engageing them to God, and that God hereupon is called their God, and they his people: and that usually the signe of the Covenant was annexed. And I am fure that Parents have as much Natural Interest in their children now as then: And I never yet faw where God had acquit us of this duty, or withdrawn this Mercy from us, and our feed.

Object. 2. The proof which you bring for this Confirmation is so obscure, that it is not like

to be generally received.

Answ. It was generally received in almost all the Churches on earth, till lately: And as far as I plead for it, it is yet Doctrinally at least owned and maintained, even by those Churches

Churches that practically have disused it. Of all the Christians on Earth, I suppose there is a thousand if not ten thousand for it . (do-Arinally or dogmatically) for one that is against it, if we judge by the Laws, Confessions, and writings of their guides. Though the Greeks I know do not own the Popish Confirmation, nor have it not fo formally as they should, and the Papists have corrupted it by their abuse; yet the thing in subflance is owned dogmatically by almost all the Christian world: And they must be very fingular persons that disowne it. 2. And I think the proofe that hath been given you is clearer, then you have for the Morality of the Lords day, for constant family Prayer, for Infant Baptism, and many a holy Duty, which yet we have fufficient proof for. What would you have plainer? Is there the least doubt of it, whether a Presonal Profession and Covenanting with God, be necessary to him that will be taken into the Number of Adult Christians, and possess their Priviledges and Communion? Or whether this Profession must be approved by the Pastour, of the Church, and known to them that must hold Communion with him? Prove if you can, that ever one man was admitted among Adult-Christians, to enjoy Communion with them, without

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without such a personal Profession. You cannot prove it. If Infant-Covenanting were enough for the Adult, then Insidels are Believers.

3. Object. But this will make Ministers to be Lords of the Church: when no man can be taken into the Church, or possess the Priviledges of a Christian, till he be Approved by them. This will put a Tyrannical Power into their hands.

Answ. 1. Such a Tyranical Power as every Physician hath, who may choose or resuse his patients; or every School-master hath that may choose or resuse his Schollars, if he engage not himself to the contrary, as Plato, Zeno, and every Philosopher did in his Schoole.

2. It is such a Tyranny as Christ hath unquestionably set up; and to accuse him of setting up Tyranny, is an unkind part of

them that look to be faved by him.

3. It is a Power that hath Conflantly been exercised by the Officers of Christ, and did not men smel out the Tyranny of it till now? What Prince did govern the Church doores, and judge who should be admitted, from the daies of Christ, till Constantines daies, when the Church was at the purest; yea or ever after for many a hundred yeares? Did not

all the Apostles, and every Preacher of the Gospel Baptize those that they convetred, and judge of them whether they were Baptizable? And did not the Bishops Consism the Baptized, without consulting another Power? Half that were admitted into the Church by Baptism, (and more) for some hundred yeares after Christ, were the Adult: and of these; the Pastour required a personal Covenant and Profession. The other half were their Insants: and for them they required the Parents Profession, and entering them into Covenant: But still the Pastours were the Judges, who were the administers.

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4. If you think it too much Power for us, I befeech you think it too much work for us: and dreame not that we have a work, and not Power to do it, or differn what we do. Set others to do it, that you can better trust.

5. Who would you have trusted with this Power? Some body must have it I have proved to you fully, that every man must not be the sole Judge of his own signess for Baptism or Church Priviledges: and that the people or Magistrates are not the sole or chief Judges: and who should it be but they, to whom it is committed by Christ in their call to the office of the Ministry?

6. Mini.

6. Ministers (as I before shewed) have no Tyrannical or Arbitrary Power. For Christ hath tied them by a Law, who to admit, and whom to reject. And if they disobey this Law, the Magistrate may correct them: So that in the exercise of this Tyrannical Power, every Minister is under the lash of the Magistrates violence, (if he grossy of send) whereas none of the people are under any violence, or force from us to obey us; but if all of them disobey us and rebel, it is their own loss, and we have no remedy.

This is the Tyranny.

7. Laftly, If you think it (as it is) fo great a Power, for us to judge of mens Profession and fitness for Church Priviledges, let it awaken you the more, to get the wifest, ablest men you can for the Ministry, that are fit for so a great trust. If the best that are to be got, are not in the Office, beshrew our Governours, and the choosers. And if you do not cast us all out, if you can put fitter men into the place, that are meeter for the trust, beshrew you for your negligence: we give you no thanks for it. But if you have no fitter for this work and truft, will you caft it upon aufitter or on none? It is a great trust for a Physician to be trusted with your lives, and a School-master and Tutour with

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your Children? But what of that? Will you therefore trust the good women, or common neighbours about you with them; yea or the Magistrate himself. Or will you have no Tutours or Physicians? Or rather will you not be the more careful to keep out Empiricks and unworthy persons, and get the ablest and faithfulest that you can. O unthankfull men, that grudge us the Power of labouring and spending our selves for their Salvation, and judging, where we must act!

4. Object. Is it not the use of the Lords Supper to Confirm us; and do not men there renew their Covenant and Prosession? What need

is there then of any more?

Answ. 1. You would think much, if at the Lords Supper we should openly call each man to a personal, explicite Profession of his Faith, and Covenanting with God: And indeed it would be a tedious, as well as unseasonable work. It is but a general or joynt Profession of all together, that is there renewed: and notwithstanding that, there may for ought we know, be many a one there that is an Insidel, and knoweth not what Christianity is. 2. The Lords Supper is the food of the Soul, confirming by way of nutrition and augmentation; and therefore you must shew that you are alive, seefore you

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ny partake of it. It is a feasting upon Christ. d with him in his family, and at his Table: is a work of Communion with Christ and th his Saints: It is one of the highest priedges of the Church: And therefore you Ist produce your little, before you can lay him to it. If a man must be admitted to the ords Supper, without any precedent, pernal Profession or Covenanting with God, on supposition, that by the act of Receing he doth all this; then men that know bt whether there be a Christ, or what he is. ay be admitted: For multitudes of such here are, that in Infancy were bapzed: And I know not by seeing him reeive, whether he know or believe any ing of Christianity. If a man converted t Age from Heathenilm, may not be adhitted to the Lords Table without a personal profession in Baptism, then neither may uch as are baptized in Infancy, be admitted vithout a personal Profession, in Confirmaion, or such as is without any other Bapism. Our Parents Profession will not serve our turn, in stead of our own when we come to age. And therefore this Objection is vaine, unless Infidels may be admitted to Communion, and all be common. But I need not speak much of this, because I shall have few such Objectours to deale wi Even the Papists themselves are many them against promiscuous communic though the Jesuites of late, have sitted most all their work, to their man pleasi designe: See fok. Thanleri stores. cap. 23, 24 pag. 257, &c. (An old Puritane, amo the Papists) And they make confession a prerequisite.

Object. 5. According to our arguin Confirmation is not necessary to those that we Baptized at full Age; and therefore it is:

necessary to any, if not to all.

Answ. I have given some Reasons why should be used, with all that have opportunity after Baptism; but I have proved more Necessary to those that were baptize in Infancy. And if it were Necessary to tother, it would not follow, that it is n Necessary at all, because not to all.

6. Object. Is it not better take up with, Implicit Profession and Covenanting, the make so great a trouble to our selves, an disturbance among the people, as this wi

make?

Answ. 1. Me thinks, not only the factof the Roman Church, but of our own might by this time have afforded us satisfyin experience, what Implicit Faith, and Im

plici

cit Professions are, and to what they tend. rule the forementioned Evils of this course. d look upon the state of our people, where u may see them in existence, and then dge whether this Objection be answered.

2. An Implicit Profession, is the lowest dleast, that in any case of extremity or ceffity can be thought tolerable, and acpted by God, and confishent with the life d being of a Church. And shall we delirately choose to offer God the work, the aft, the lowest that's possible to find accepnce? Nay he will have the best, as he deeves the best, or he will not accept it, when e have it to give: Shall we think that in a le of freedom; the same will be accepted. hich Necessity only can excuse? Or shall e be content that our Churches have as mav diseases as will confist with life and being? 3. An Implicit Profession makes or proves

en but Implicitely Christians. Such dumbe ncertaine signes, do leave us in So great incertainty of the thing signified, that it eems but a very mocking of God (that will ot be mocked) when we have opportunity or an open Intelligible Profession, and will

ot use it, or require it.

4. It is against Nature for a man that hath Tongue in his head, to refuse to utter his R 2

mind any other wife then by dumb shew and yet expect to be understood and accepted. What is the Tongue made for but a express the mind? Indeed if a man be dumbed and can neither speak not write, it is most tollerable to take an uncertaine signe from such a man; then from another that bath the use of Tongue or pen.

q. It is a very Implicite denying of Chris which many call an Implicite Profession. If man that hath a Tongue in his mouth, shall refuse to Profess the Christian Faith and quar rel with the Minister that calls him to it and fay, we shall have no other Profession from him then to come to Church, and pu the bread and wine into his mouth, and not to deny Christ expressy, I leave it to any reasonable man, whether there be not so much of an Implicite desying Christ in this refusing to confess him, when they are called to it by their Pastours, whom God hath commanded them to obey, and that in a case and season, when all the Church hath required it, or taught it to be due.

6. It is contrary to the honour of Christ, and the very Nature of Christianity, for men to take up with Implicite, uncertaine Prosessions, when we have opportunity of more open free Prosessions. He is not a Ma-

er to be assumed of. And he will have no evants that will not confess him before en, even in the hazzard of life; much more daies of the freedom of the Gospel: As ith the heart men must believe to Righteous-fs, so with the mouth Confession is made unto alvation, Rom. 10. 10. What reason have eto whisper or draw back, in a cause of

ch a nature and weight as this.

7. Shall we thus teach our people to steem Christianity, as an unobservable hing, by no more observing it? The Soemnity of mens Transition into the Adultate of actual Believers, doth make it more Observable in the eyes of men; and they will ee that there is more in it, then commonly now esteemed. I find by experience that our people hate no preaching more, then Differencing Preaching, which leaves or huts them out from the number of the San-History and sets them as one the lest-hand, n the face of the Congregation, and judgeth them before the time: but faine they would have Ministry confound and jumble all together: And then you may make them as great finners as you will, fo you will make them no worse then the Justified, that are forgiven, and shall be faved. And fo in Practice, they love no differencing waies:

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But shall we so far gratistic the Devil and the steel shall we so far gratistic the Devil and the steel shall be servents and the world, as conspicuous as we can be that the Consciences of poor sinners, may rather a wakened, then cheated by us: And ther fore we should choose the most soler Transition, and Record the names of the Consirmed, and let the people be brought to a publike Observation, of the Necessity Faith and Holiness, while the Covenant an Profession of it is made so Necessary.

8. That is the best means, that is sittest that attain the End; The End of a Covenant is the Coblige; and the End of a Profession to declare the mind: And I pray you which is sitted for these Ends: An Express Profession and Covenant, or a dumbe uncertain signe, becoming to Church; paying Tithes?

9. Such dumb Professions are less tolerable now, because we have many in our Assemblies that we know to be no Christians. know of many that will heare, that be lieve no life to come, and secretly make a scorne of Christ and Scripture, and many more that know not what Christianity is, as is aforesaid. Now shall we take up with such signess of Christianity, as we see and know are commonly used by Insidels.

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when we may have better?

10. It is effential to a Prosession to be in some measure explicit: for Prositeri is but balàm vel publicè fateri; It is no Prosession if it be not, or pretend not to be, an Expression of the mind: And therefore to be Implicite and not Express, is so far to be against the very Nature of the Prosession; in that measure as your Prosession is Implicite (as it's called) and not Express, in that measure it is no Prosession at all.

Object. 7. But when you have the most express Covenant or Profession, you are not sure that it is true, and that the man is a believer

at the heart.

Answ. 1. I am sure that it's Truly a Profession, that is, a Pretended signe of the mind, though I am not sure that it's True Profession, that is, a True infassible signe of the mind: I can know the metaphysical, though not the Morall Truth of it. And then I can be sure that I do my duty, and take up according to the Directions of Christ. It is his work to judge the heart immediatly, as being his prerogative to know it: but it's my work to judge of the Credibility of the Profession.

2. And what if I have no infassible Certainty? Must I therefore throw up all, and make the Pastoral Church-government

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Christ to the wilderness, and not so much a require a Credibility, because we cannot hav an Infallibility? This may not be.

Object. 8. But this will encourage the Ana baptists and Congregational, in their Expression Covenantings, by our coming so neer them

Answ 1. I may better say, you will mak I men Anabaptists, and drive them too far by your loofness, and willfully founning plaine duty. How can weake professours b drawn to think well of that party, which they fee do shun so needfull a Work of God 2. Love and Peace will teach all Christian to fay, that it's the best for Unity and heal ing of our breaches to come as neare dif fenting Brethren as we may, and not to fly the further fromthem. At least we may not rui from truth and duty, that we may be unlike our dissenting Brethren. 3. And I take it to be my duty to tell this alowd to the Christian world, that after long contest with the Anabaptifts, and opposition of their waies, I am grown (as I confidently think) to this difcovery of the mind of God in suffering them among us; that he had this great truth and duty, to which be faw it necessary to awake us; the Church having been fo lamentably defiled, Discipline made an impossible thing,

and

and mens Salvation grievously hindred, by the common seeret, unobserved transition of all people into the name, and number, and Priviledges of Adult Christians: therefore did God permit these men, to step too far on the other fide, that the noise might be the greater, and his call the more observable; so that they are his messengers, calling aloud to England, and all other Christian Churches in Europe, to keep the doore, and repaire the hedge, and no more to take an Infant-baptism, and Profession of our Parents, as a sufficient Evidence of the Title of the Adult, to the Name, or Place, or Priveledges of Christians; but to give them Infant Priviledges upon the Parents Profession; but to require of them a fober, serious Profession and Covenanting by themselves, in owning their Baptismal Covenant, before we number them with Adult-Christians: And that God hath suffered the Anabaptists to make such a stirreamong us, will prove a mercy to us in the End, if we have the wit and grace to learn this, upon this troublefome occasion; and then the Reformation will do us more good, then ever the Anabaptifts did us harm. But if we will not learne, nor obey Gods call, we must yet looke to be molested by them more, or clie else to do and suffer worse.

Object. 9. But if yeu will not take a non-renouncing of Christ, and Infant Baptism as sufficient, without a Personal Covenant and Profession, you may on the same grounds call men every week to such a Profession, because that the former Profession shews not what they afterwards are, but what then they are.

Answ. 1. The case is quite another: In your instance, it is but the continuance of the same Profession and Condition that is requisite: And I am bound to take it as continued, while I have no Evidence to question it, and see the performance of it, as far as belongeth to my cognisance. But in my ease the Conditions and the Professions are not the same: A new Condition of Right, is necessary to the Adult, which they had not at all in their Insant Baptism. Then they entered upon their Parents Faith or Profession; but at age they must necessarily have a Faith, or Profession of their own, or else they actually cease to be Christians.

Professions of Faith, and renewing Covernant with God, have ever been used in the Church; both before Christs Incarnation and since, and indeed, the Lords Supper doth import it: And for my part, I thinke

it a very convenient, edifying course, to have the Articles of our Faith every day repeated, as the Belief of that Church, and the people to stand up at it, to signific their confent; so be it, you will not take up with this silent Profession alone, and exclude a more explicite one, when it is requisite. But this sitly significant our standing to the first.

Object. 10. But this will saft you upon the same aifficulties which you Object to the Anabaptists; you will not know at what Age to take

men for Adult-Christians.

Answ. 1. We shall not accept them for their Age, but for their Profession: And we can easily tell when they offer themselves to tryal and Profession, and desire the Communion of the Church: As the Ancient Churches could tell when their Catechumens

were to be baptized.

2. And for the time when we must judge their Insant Church-state to cease, if they own not the Covenant personally, we cannot set a certaine yeare, nor is it necessary: but when their Insancy ceaseth, then their Insant-state ceaseth: That is, when they come to the full or competent use of Reason: But then observe, 1. That if they be called at such a time to prosess their Faith, and own their Covenant, and resuse it, then we must judge

judge them refusers of Christianity unless the Reasons of the Resusal allows another judgment. 2. Or if they will fully neglect for a considerable space, to own their Baptismal Covenant, and to seeke a standing among the Adult Christians, it's a strong prefumption that they are Backsliders. 3: If they only suspend their personal Profession at age, we must only suffend our Judgment, till we have some light to discern the cause: and cannot be fure that there are Deferters or Apostates. 4. But we are sure that they are not to be numbred by the Church among Adult Christians, till they have produced the Evidence of their Title, which is no other then A Credible, Personal Profession. So that it's easy to know when any such person is to be admitted, and publikely owned as an Actual Believer, though it be not so easy to discern of all, before that time, whether they are to be reckoned as Defertours or not. He that wilfully neglecteth to come among the Adult Christians, long after he hath the full use of Reason (which is not with all at the same age) is to be much suspected, at leaft: And commoly about 16, or 17, or 18, years of age, is the time when we have reafon to expect that they should feek the Communion and Privilidges of the Adult: For about

about that age, they have a competent use of Reason.

Object. 11. But if you adenit them into the Church in Infancy, say the Anabaptists, you will be obliged to excommunicate them all, that prove ungodly when they come to age, and not to let them silently pass out of the Church again.

Answ. Excommunication is either an excluding them from all Relation of members to the Catholike Church, or from the actual Communion of the Church, or from both. The former we can do but Declaratively. In the latter we also adjoyne the charge of God. for the execution of the sentence. But those that were never personal Professours of Faith, nor admitted into the Communion of Adult Christians, are not fit to be cast out of it: And this is the common use of Excommunication, to remove those, as unfit, from the Communion of the Adult, that once were in it, and forfeit that Communion: which cannot belong to them that never were in it. And for our Declaring them Defertours or Apostates, we may do it upon just occasion, but we are not bound to do it publikely by all that are guilty; this being not the Excommunication, that is so enjoyned in the Scriptures. Where do you find that the Church in Scripture-times or after, was wont 254 Confirmation & Restauration the Necessary

to Excommunicate Apostates? And yet Apostates were formerly of the Church. It is those that hang on, and pretend still to be of the Church, and intrude into the Actual Communion of it, that we must cast out, when they deserve it.

Object. 12. But if they cease to be Christians, you must Baptize them againe, if you

will receive them.

Answ. No such matter: The Anabaptists themselves will not Rebaptize an Apostate, when he returneth to the Church. He is to be received by Confession and Absolution, and not by Baptism. If a Christian turn Turk, and afterward Return, he is not to be Rebaptized.

Object. 13. But by this means you will unchristen the people, and then they will be exasperated, and turn Heathens, or hearken

to any seducers that will mislead them.

Answ. 1. No: we will unchristen no man: but do that honour to Christianity, and that right to the Church and the Soules of men, as to make a difference between Christians and Insidels, and that somewhat wider then the bare Names. He that is a Christian shall be more encouraged by this course, and he that is not, cannot be unchristened by us. If men will not unchristen

them-

hemselves, they need not sear less the just rying and approving of their Christianity hould unchristen them. 2. How little honour it is to Christ and the Church, to have the number made up, by such as we would disallow; I have shewed you before, and also what a mischief that is to themselves, which some would give them as a benefit. 3. If Magistrates and Ministers do their duty, (yea or but Ministers alone) they will better be kept from Heathenism, or other evils in the state of Expectants and Catechamens, then in the state of Church-members, where Discipline will make them mad.

Object. 14. But at least your designe lookes as if you would keep the Children of all such unchristened; and what work would that

make?

Answ. I medle not with that Question, but leave every man to his own Judgment. And if I did my self keep off such children, I think it would prove but very sew. For 1. I would refuse none of the Parents that had aliquid Christi, that made but a Credible Prosession of Christianity. 2. I am perswaded that this Practise would bring almost all the people to a tollerable Prosession, when they know it is expected, and what lieth on it. 3. Upon experience now I find, that

both the Parents are seldom so bad as to be uncapable of offering their child to God, (in the Judgment of the Church) Nay commonly here the more one of the persons is in scandalous sinne, the more the other hates it: And they are seldom both grosly ignorant. And those that were delayed on these terms, would receive no wrong by it. Gods way is the best. The Children of unbelievers must not be inchurched in waies of our devising, nor respected before the honour of Christ, and the common good of the Church of God. But of this I say againe, I interpose not my Judgment, but leave each man to his own.

Object. 15: But though Confirmation be a duty, jet none but Bishops have power to do it: and therefore it is not a lawfull thing for Pres-

byters to attempt it.

Leg. Grotii, Epift. 162. ad Bignon: p.397. Clem. Roman. against a lower Episcopacy, then ours.

Anlw. 1. What mean you by Bishops? It is a word that hath, by mens application, got so many significations, that we may well expect that you give us the Definition of a Bishop, before you make him

the matter of your Dispute. And yet I have read so many Bookes that Dispute for Episcopy, and so sew that tels us what they

mean

nean by it; that I must needs say, that most f them lose their labour, with such as I. fby a Bishop you mean, such as our English ishops were, or any fixed Pastour of many articular Churches, I deny that such were ver Instituted by Christ, much less have they he fole Power of fuch administrations.

2. Do you meane that it is by Gods Law, r the Laws of men, that Diocesan Bishops

nly may Confirm? If y Gods Laws, proveit, nd we shall quickly yield. ut that it's very unlikely ou should do. If you y that only the Apostles d this Power, I Answer,

That then fixed Diofan B shops had none fit: For the Apostles ere none such. 2. Then imothy, Titus, Epaphro. tus, &c. when they prend to have been Bilops, had it not. 3. Ana: as was no Apostle, that id hands on Paul, that might receive the Ho-

Ghost: of this more

Petav. him felf faith, Differt. Ecclef. lib 1. cap. 3. pag. 35. 1gnorare non potuit Hieronimus quibusdam in locis absente Episcopo Presbyteros idem illud Sacramentum Confirmationis dedifle: quod de Agypto testatur commentarius, &c. And p. 36. he saith, Constat olim folos Epifcopos ordinario jure tam baptismum , quam panitentium reconciliatione administraile So that they may then as well forbid ! refbyters to Baptize.

But if you say, that this Power is

given to the Bishops meerly by the Laws o men; then either by the Laws of Magi strates, or of Bishops. For the former, wi know of none in force with us, to that pur pole: and if they were, it is a work withou their line, which Christ hath done before them, and not left to them, to describe the Offices of his Church. And for Bishop Canons, we know no Power that any Bi shops ever had, to make standing Laws fo the Universal Church; nor of any such Law that are obligatory to us: And the Oppo nents themselves do violate the Canons o General Councils without scruple (as th 20th of I. Con. Nic. and abundance more and how can they oblige us more then them?

3. Presbyters have the Keys of the King dom: Therefore they may take in, and Cor.

firm thereby.

4. Presbyters may by Baptifus take i members into the Universal Church, an judge of their fitness in order thereto: there fore much more may they Confirm then and judge of their fitness in order thereto.

5. Its granted, that Presbyters may Al Solve, (which was ordinarily by Impositio of hands) yea, saith Bishop Wher, th Deacons were fometime allowed it: there fore Presbyters may Confirm: Or if yo yielde

yielded but Absolution, you would yield much of what we contend for, seeing so many violate their Baptismal Covenant, that Absolution for Restoring of them will be as

necessary as Confirmation.

6. Hierome, that makes Presbyters and Bishops by Gods Law to be the same, doth yet according to the custom of the Church say, that What doth the Bishop except Ordination, which the Presbyter doth not: therefore he supposed that Presbyters might Confirm.

7. The same Hierome expressly saith, that

Imposition of hands was referved to the Bishop, for the honour of Priesthood, rather then by Divine Ordination: * Therefore it is but a humane institution

8. The Episcopal Divines, and other Writers of their side, do commonly maintaine the validity of Presbyters Ordination, viz. that in case of Necessity it is lawfull, and where there is no state Necessity, it is not a nul-

* Hier. cont. Lucifer. Ad honorem potius sacerdetii, quam ad
legis necessitatem. Alioqui si ad Eposcopi
tantum imprecationem
Sp. Sanctus dessuit,
lugendi sunt, qui in
winculis aut castellis
aut in remotioribus loeis, per presbyteros
(5 Diacous Baptizati, ante dormierunt,
quam ab Episcopis
inviserentur.

Clem. Alexand. Pedageg. 3. Cui imponer Prosbyter ma-

Blaff.

Ambros. in Ebh.
4. Apud Ægyptum
presbyteri consignant,
si præsens non sit Episcopus.

- Grotius Epift. cordef. 154. pag. 382. Sireste expendantur qua ipse Aurelius, de rebus nec wetitus, nec prohibitis disserit, non mirum si in iis alibi atque alio tempore alii fuerint mores; non erat cause satis, curtantis anims, tam odiosis illationibusista qualtio tractaretur. Nam etiamsi aut baptizatus nunquam ungeretur, aut ungeretur tantum baptismi tempore, baptizante etiam presbytero. Adde etiamsi nulla subsequeretur manuum imp sitio, donis illis que per manuum impositionem conferebant Apostoli pridem ressantibus, non ideo periret bonor prasidentia spiscopalis, que tunc etiam in Ecslesia fuit cum Epis-

lity where it is irregular. I cited (Christian Concord, pag. 53, 54, &c.) many Bishops and their defenders, that thus justifie the Protestant Church. es, that have no Bishops: as Dr. Field, Bishop Downame, Bishop fewel, Saravia, Bishop Alley, Boshop Pilkington, Bishop Bridges, B shop Bilson, Grotius, Lord Digby, Mr. Chisenhal, Bishop Davenant, Bishop Prideaux, Nowel, Bishop Andrews, Mr. Chillingworth: to whom I adde (to make up twenty) 17. Bishop Brambal, of Schism. 18. And Dr. Steward, in his Answer to Fountaines Letter. 19. Dr. Ferne, 20 And Bishop Ofter, in his Judgment lately published. Abundance more might ear fily be added: but Mr. Mason's Book in vindicacation

cation of the Ordination of the forraigne Reformation. Churches, may ferve instead of more.

9 We have no Bishop o do it: and therefore it nust be done by Presbyers: Or we have none hat we know of; and non copi de Presbyteri nomen indiscriminatim usurparetur, de cum præsidentia illa, non Elektione, quæ filexandriæ primum sieri cepit, Marco morsus, sed participati consensus gradu deferretur.

fe, & non apparere, are to us all one.

10. Presbyters may Impose hands in Orlination, and ever did here in England: Therefore much more in Absolution and Confirmation.

11. King Charles, by the advice of his Doctours in the Isle of Wight, reserved only Ordination, and not Confirmation and Ab-

olution to the Bishops.

- 12. Presbyters are Governours of the Churches, which are their Pastoral charge; nd are called Rectors: (see B shop Whers, Reduction of Episcopacy, &c. proving it) Therefore they may do this, which is an act of Government or Guidance of the particutar Church.
- 13. Presbyters must teach and oversee the cople as their charge, and deliver them the acrament: Therefore they must judge to shom they must do it.

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14. A Diocesane Bishop is uncapable of doing it faithfully: Could one man Try, Approve and Confirm faithfully, all the Soul in 200 or 300 Charches? It's known that here they did not: and it's plain they cannot. If they lay hands on them without Try. al, upon the Presbyters word, then I. Thu yieldeth, all save the Ceremony, which we require. 2. And it is a venturing their practifes on the judgment and fidelity of other men; who may fend them Infidels to be Confirmed for ough: they know. But if they Try themselves, they are never able to do for fo many, in feafon: fome will be old men, before the Bishop will have leisure to Confirm them; and many a hundred die without it. Nor do they know the people as their Pastours do.

Church of England, under the Bishops, is for the Power of Presbyters herein as far as we desire: For 1. The Presbyters of Curates, had by the Rubrick, the Tryal and Approbation of those, that were sent to the Bishop for Confirmation. 2. The Bishops accordingly tooke them on their words, with a Certificate, and used not to try them themselves, but only to Impose hands with Prayer and blessing. 3. And this by the Canon,

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means of Reformation and Reconciliation, 263

heinsuffragane also might do; which yield-

th that a Presbyter may do it.

16. The Pope himself doth yield that Presysters may do it. And Gregories Epist. to hat end, is put into their Canon Law, Dist. 95. 1. part. Baptizates etiam Christate eos tangere conceditur, and Gregories Epist. to Januar. Calaritan. is annexed: By which it appeareth that they took his former rohibition so ill, that he was saine to reverse

. And though c. 11. he be forbidden Inintes signare, in the presence of the Bishop, vithout his command, yet so he was foridden also to administer the Eucharist, yea nd the Rural Presbyters, might not give he cup or bread, in presence of the City resbyters, c. 12. ex Concil. Neocasar. 1. 13. But certainly this proveth neither the me nor the other, out of their Power.

17. The Papit's commonly confess, that resbyters may ex dispensatione, Confirm by Imposition of hands: so Bellarmine himels. And the Shool-men ordinarily make it

in act of the Presbyters Power.

18. If it be proper to Bishops, then eiher because of their Order or Jurisdiction: Not of Order: For they are of the same Order with Presbyters, as is frequently confessed by Bishops and Papists themselves, and

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differ but in degree; Not of Juri/diction: 100 for it is no more an act of Jurisdiction to Confirm, then to Baptize or give the Eu. M

19. Protestant Divines are commonly h agreed, that Confirmation is not proper to d Bishops, but may be used by Presbyters. For I. France, Belgia, Helvetia, Denmarke, Saxonie, Sweden, the Palatinate, the Countries of the Duke of Brandenburge, of the Duke of Brunswike, the Land-grave of Hassia, with the rest of the Protestant Princes of Germany, and also Hungarie, Transilvania, the Protestants in Poland, &c. besides Scotland, and so many in England, are all without Bishops, having put them down: And though three or foure of these countries have superintendents, yet they make not Confirmation proper to them. 2. The English Bishops, ordinarily maintaine against the Papists, that Presbyters may Confirm, and therefore we have their concurrance, as in Dr. Field, Bishop Dow. nam, Mason, and many others is appa-

20. If all this will not fatisfie you, for Peace sake, we will forbeare Imposition of bands, which you suppose to be the Bishops proragative; and we will be content

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to do no more, then Presbyters alwaies did
in Baptizing the Adult; even to judge and
Approve of the Capacity of those whom they
Baptized: and so will we only judge of the
Prosession and Capacity of those that we take
the charge of, and own as Adult Christians, and
must administer the Lords Supper to: And
this common reason cannot deny us.

Object. 16 But if Presbyters may do it, yet so cannot you; For you are 'no Presbyters, as wanting Episcopal Ordination: or else schismatical, as having east them off to whom

you were sworn.

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Answ. I. In my second sheet for the Ministry, and my Christian Concord, I have answered already: And for fuller answer, I referre you to the London Ministers Vindication, to Mr. Mason's Vindication of the Ordination of the Protestant Churches, &c. If Bishop Bancroft himself, as Dr. Bernard mentions, in Bishop Usher's Judgment, and the rest of the Prelates, were against the reordaining the Scots Ministers, me thinks, few should be so much more intemperate, then that intemperate Prelate, as to judge their Ordination Null. And if the Papists in the Canon Law, do judge that in some cases an excommunicate mans Ordination is valid, me thinks Protestants should not be worse to the Church then they: Est cially those that are for the Necessity of a uninterrupted succession of justly ordaine Pastours; who must (I dare boldly say) drive their succession from unmeeter, an more uncapable hands, then English Pastours.

2. No more is necessary to the Authority and just ordination of a Pastour but that he enter according to the Laws of God; which Laws require us to submit to the tryal, of our Rulers and Brethren, Magistrates (in some cases) and Pastours; and to come in according to the best means, for Election and Approbation, that are then to be had and used; but they bind us not to come in by waies Impossible, nor to see that our Antecessours through all generations have been lawfully ordained.

3. I have shewed already, and God willing shall more sully do it, in a Disputation on that subject, that our English Episcopeay was not that which God established, but intollerably inconsistent with it: And therefore neither are mentheless Ministers for being without their Ordinations, nor are they Schismaticks for consenting to their depo-

ficion

4. As for breaking Oathes of Canonical
Obedience

Dhedience to them, I think but few among is did take any fuch oath, and therefore broke none.

5. Many among us were Ordained by Bishops, and some that were Ordained took not that oath: and others that did, yet obeyed them while they stood, and what

could they do more.

6. The younger fort of Ministers had no hand in taking down the Bishops; and therefore are not scismatical thereby: And that their Ordination is no Nullity, Bishop Offer and other twenty Prelatical witnesses forecited will testifie.

Object. 17. But on the centrary side it will be said, that you would set up the Popish Sa-

crament of Confirmation againe.

Answ. The Papists have made another thing of it: They use it to Insants, and so will not we: They make a proper Sacrament of it: They make the visible signes to be Anointing and Crossing, in the name of the Father, Sonne and Holy Ghost; and they make Imposition of hands no part of it, but cast it off, (though in words they own it) They adjoyn a boxe of the eare, to signific, the opposition that Christs Souldiers must expect: They have it to imprint I know not cap. 10, & 11.

what indelible Caracter, and to give grace ex opere operato: They make it to be an entering of us into Christs militia abusing Baptism, as being but an entering us into his Family, and not his warfare: All this is nothing to that, which I am pleading for, and which the protestant writers do wish for.

Object 18 At least you will revive the Prelatical Confirmation againe, which the old

non-conformists were against.

Answ. We will revive nothing ofit, but what was good: The corruption we shall omit. They did it but on a few, (contrary to their own Laws) but we would have it used to all. They Confirmed children that understood not what they said: But we shall expect an understanding Profession of Faith. They did it in a hurry as an idle Ceremony: we would have it done deliberately and with great reverence. The Bishop only did it with them, that knew not whom he did Confirm, but ventured on other mens words, or without : But we would have the Pastour do it, that knoweth the persons, and hath time to try them, having one Parish and not two hundred to overfee.

Object. But, at least, the Papists and Prelats will be hardened or encouraged by your coming so neare them.

Anjw. I will not cast off the Work of Sod, because that any will make it an octasion of sinne. And I take it to be the more my duty and not the less, because it tends to Peace with all. I take it not to be any part of my Religion, to study how to cross my brethren, or forbeare a practice (yea so necessary a duty) because they like it. I detet that principle and spirit. I rather seare, lest their own selsconceitedness, interest, prejudice and discontent, will make them dislike it.

Object. 19. What have we to do with the signe, When the thing that occasioned the use of it is ceased? Imposition of hands was

at first only for the gift of Miracles.

Anlw. 1. It was much for the gift of Miracles, but not only. And if the giving of one fort of the Gifts of the Holy Ghoft be ceased; yet the other, more excellent and necessary gifts continue; and therefore no reason the signe should cease, because it was not appropriated to the gift of Miracles. But 2. If any man scruple either the signe of Imposing hands, or the Name of Consirmation, we desire him his liberty: these are not the things that we contend for: Let him but yield us that which I have shewed to be most Certaine, and most usefull to the Church;

Church; that is, a solemn Transition out of the an Infant Church-state into an Adult, under an Approbation of the Pastours, and the just cognisance of the Church; and let him call it what he will, I shall not much contend with him who about the name, or signe of Imposition.

Object. 20. Abundance of Ministers are the ram, imprudent joung men, and not fit to manage so great a trust: and so it will marre all; while some are so strict, that they will me refuse all that seem not godly to their censorious minds; and some will be loose man-pleasers, and let in all, and turn it but to an unprofitable.

formality.

Answ. 1. While men are men, they will and as men. If we shall have no Church Ordinances and Administrations, till you are secured from humane abuse of them, you must shut up the Church doors, and give up all; and shut up your Bibles, till Papists and Insidels can find no matter of cavelling at the Translation. 2, As I said before, this indeed should provoke the Magistrate to set a faithfull guard on the Church doores, that seeing the Pastours have so great a Trust, and the danger of abusing it is so great, the worthiest should be chosen that can be had. And if it be not so, you reproach your selves, that are choosers and Pastours, and have the

Rule. Why choose you not better if you now where to find them? 3. This Objetion, is as much against our Judging of hose that are to be Baptized, which yet the Ministers that did Baptize, have ever done, and were you not Baptized already, we must admit you, and judge who is to be admitted, as the ancient Preachers of the Gospel did. 4. The Episcopal Brethren had more wit, then to be against Confirmation, because one man may use it too strictly, and another too loosely: The Congregational men are not against Church-Covenants or Professions, because one Pastour or Church may be too ftrict; and another too loofe in judging of mens Piety: The Presbyterians are not against Trying men before admission to the Lords Supper, nor against Discipline, because one Eldership may be too strict, and another too loose. The Anabaptists are not against Rebaptizing men at age, because one Minister may refuse the fit, and another may take in all that come. Why then should a possibility of Ministers miscarriage, cause you to be more against this, then all the rest? 5. If Ministers be Affociated, they will be accountable for such miscariages; and the Advise and Admonition of their Brethren. may do much to prevent or reform such abuses:

abuses: And the faithfull people of their charge, will somewhat observe them, and bid Archippus take beed to the Ministry than he hath received in the Lord, that he fulfill it. Col. 4. 17. 6. As long as you are not for. ced into our charge, but have your Liberty to choose your Pastour, (as now it is) you have the less reason for this complaint. If the Laws of Zeno or Plato be thought too strict in their Schooles, as long as the Schollars may choose to come there, and all volunteers, they may the better beare it. 7. As I said before, the trust must be put in some or other to judge: And where can it be fitter then in them, who by study are prepared, and by office appointed by Christ hereunto. 8. If you will give a Presbytery, or one Eminent Minister in every market-Town, or vifiters of your own appointment, a special care to oversee the rest in doing this, and fuch like works, I shall be no gainfayer, fo the work be but done: the more inspection and circumspection the better. 9. If one Minister refuse the fit, there be many more that will not. 10 Your Commissioners may have power moderately to correct the Ministers abuses in their work.

But because I perceive that Rulers are unreasonably jealous, lest the Pastours of the Church means of Reformation and Reconciliation. 273

Church will do too much, rather then lest hey do too little, and are more folicitous to ise the bridle of restraint, then the spurre of nstigation: I intreate them to consider these

things:

1. That most certainly there is no part of Ill our Ministry, that slirs up neer so much Il will, passion, malice, yea and persecutions against us, as this part, about taking in and casting out, and exercising the Keyes of the Kingdom; in which you are so jealous

of us.

2. And alas Ministers are flesh and Blood, is well as others: and all of them too tender of their Interest, of Profit, Reputation, and Ease: which are all contradicted notably by his work. Do you think Ministers will be o hot on it, to have their neighbours hate hem and revile them, and to live as Owles in he places where they live, and to put themelves on a great deal of trouble? Surely it is a very felf-displeasing thing to the very Nature of man, unless he be a monster', to displease his neighbours, and be hated and baited by hem. And it will provoke them not only o forbeare all acts of kindness or bounty, out to deny them their due maintenance, as ar as ever they can: And many, if not most Ministers, have no great mind to be so used;

nay had rather lose it, then go to Law for all their dues; the trouble, and cost, and odium of it is so great. So that our Parliaments have been too much afraid, lest Ministers should cease to be men, or to be sinners, and to be manpleasers, and to indulge their flesh; and lest we should runne into the fire, and lie down among the thorns, and choose

a life of trouble and sufferings.

3. And me thinks experience should fatis- of fie men of this. Do you not see how back- is ward Ministers are to Church-Reformation, In and Discipline in the exercise, when they have been most forward for the Power? How h little is yet done in it, for all our liberty, afe m ter all our Prayers, and petitions, and writing for it? Do you find in most Parishes it that Ministers are prone to overdo? certainly

4. Do you not know that all the Work of God is so much against Nature, and hath fuch abundance of enemies and difficulties in the way that few men are like to be guilty of over-doing? Why be you not as carefull to hinder men from overdoing in fanctifying the Lords day, in teaching and praying with their samilies, &c. but because you see that few need your curb. I am confident, should Parliaments do their best to drive on Mini-

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thers to such works as these, and make Laws upon Laws, to spur them to the practice, they would not be able to bring one half of us, nor the tenth man, to reach so farre, as Christ hath bound us; no nor one man of

us, in all respects.

And yet l'againe say, that is any rash men are overrigid and abuse their trust (which is likest to be those whose maintenance no whit cometh from the people; for in the rest there is more danger of the contrary,) we desire not that they should be exempted from the Magistrates, Ministers, or peoples due means for their amendment. But let the spurre be most used, seeing there is most need; and let us see some severe Laws, to drive us on to those duties, that sless and blood, and all the world is so much against.

Come now to the last part of my taske, which is to give some brief Directions for the most effectual Practice of this excellent; needfull work. And I shall first speake of the Duty of Mnisters in order to it, and 2. Of the peoples Duty, and lastly of the Magistrates. The Duty of the Pastours I judge to consist in these particulars.

, Direct. 1. Let the Pastours in each Coun-

try meet together, and agree as one man in faithfulness, and self-denial, to do their duty; that the most conscionable may not be liable to the reproach of fingularity, because the rest betray them, and the Church and Cause of Christ, by withdrawing, and leaving the work undone: fo long bath the Church already suffered the neglect, even of godly Ministers, that in such a time of leave and helpe, we still hold off, and dare not venture on a little displeasure of the people. when our Ancestours ventered on the slames; I grieve to think what a shame it will be to our names, and to the Reformed Churches, and what a confusion it may bring upon our faces, before our Righteous Judge. And it is a griefe to me, if I were sure of Magistrates assistance, that all our Enemies shall fay, and that the Histories of this age shall tell posterity, that the Ministers of England, after fasting, prayers, warres and vowes pretended for Reformation, would yet do little or nothing toward it, but preach; even in times of Liberty and encouragement, till the Magistrate did it : And that it must be the work of the Magistrate, after our unworthy, lazy, or treacherous defertion of it. Had we no more help then we have, we might do much, were we willing and unanimous.

Direct. z.

Direct. 2. Let us take heed of extending these Agreements to any unnecessary Circumstances, so as to lay the stress of the business on them, or to make that necessary, which is unaccessary: But let us Agree on the Generall certain points, and leave particular men to their Liberty, in modes and circumstances, not judging each other, if we differ herein: or if one be more or less strict then another in the execution.

Direct. 3. Let us yet all be very carefull, that in point of tryall and judging mens Profession, we avoid extreames: On one side let us not be Righteous overmuch, by keeping out any, that make the most broken, intelligible Profession of Faith and Repentance, and a Godly life, that may be taken for credible: and remember that we are not fearchers of the heart, and that charity judgeth not evil of any, that are capable of a better Judgment. And certainly a humble Soul that's conscious of its own infirmities, and unworthiness will be very tender of condemning another, without very fatisfying Evidence. Of this I referre you to my first Dispute, of Right to Sacraments.

On the other side, let us take heed of turning this duty into a meer formality, and making nothing of it, but mocking the

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Church and God. Let us not take up with a Profession of any other kind of Faith, but the true Christian saving Faith; nor with any Prosession of this Faith, which we are able to prove to be Incredible.

Direct. 4. None of the Aged that have already been admitted to the Communion of the Church in the Lords Supper, may be brought under Confirmation by Imposition of hands, as we have before shewed. But all that were yet never admitted to this special part of Communion, nor have made any solemne Approved Prosession, should yet be called to it, be they young or ould, when

they demand Church Communion.

If you ask me what shall be done with the rest, seeing they were admitted irregularly, without any Profession of the Faith? I Answer, I. Acquaint them plainly with the Nature of Christianity, and what a Church is, and what is the Office of a Pastour, and what the duty of the flock, to God, to him, and themselves, and one another. 2. Then tell them, that you resolve to proceed according to these Rules in the Government of your flock; and to exercise this Discipline. Tell them plainly (that they be not deceived) both what are the benefits of a Churchstate and Discipline, and what are the dissipance of the dissipance of the control of the control

culties

means of Keformation and Accommission, L/y culties that unprepared men are like to grudg at: and how hardly they will take it to be followed, and not suffered to rest in sinne, and openly reproved, and cast out with shame, if they will not be Penitent and Reforme. And then tell them, that if there be any that have flipt into a Church-state (in thew) and knew not what Christianity was or what they did, and finde themselves as vet unfit for it, if they do forbeare the Priviledges of the Church, till they are better prepared, and acquainted with them, and can use them to their profit, you shall in meane time be ready to Teach them publikly and privatly, till they are prepared: And those that are fit to continue, and use such Priviledges, advise not to forbeare them. But let them know, that you can neither take all the Parish as such for members of the Universal Church, or of your charge, and therefore must have some better Evidence, especially after such a consusion, that negligence hath brough into the Church: And you cannot take any man to be of your charge against his will, and therefore you must know their minds. 3. Give them notice, that all that own their Church membership, and will have Communion with shat Church , under your Ministry and Pa-

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storal overfight, are defired by you to sign we nifie their defires, by giving in their names to be the Cleark of the Parish, or some other first person; or if they refuse that, by coming in to you. 4. When you have their names, the keep them some time, while you get information of the persons lives. And then give anotice to all (if it may be, to avoid imputation of partiality; or at least of all that you for have reason to suspect, of gross ignorance or impiety) by streets, Villages, or houses, to come to speak with you, on some appointed daies: where you may discerne the fitnels of some; and such as you find to be grofly ignorant or scandalous, advise them of to flay till they are prepared, offering them in your help, because else you must do that B in a way of Discipline, that they are unsit be beare. 5. All that disown their own standing and Church membership, or prefent Right to Priviledges, and withdraw into the order of Catechumens, as being ignorant in what they did before, you may safely teach them as Catechumens, and are not bound to enrage them by Church-Discipline, which they consent not to, and are not capable of. 6. All those that you find tolerable, that have owned their Churchmembership, and not withdrawne themselves

wou ought to keep their names, in a Church Book for memory, and to call them folemnly (at some day of humiliation, or other tit scason) to own their Relation publikly. their names being read, that all may know with whom they are to hold Communion. And if there be need, you may justly require them there openly to renew their Proof fession and Covenant with God. 7. Your flock being then Reformed and known, you need not call them againe, to examination before particular Sacraments, or other parts of Church-communion. 8. When any members are after added, they should, if unconfirmed, and such as never did Communicate, be received folemnly by Prayer and Benediction; and if they be such as have been admitted to Communion, let them be only Approved upon renewing their Profession. For the one fort are Confirmed in their Relation to both Catholike and particus lar Church; but the other, only enter then into the particular Church, being solemnly received into the Catholick Church before, and perhaps into some other particular Church, or into that from which they departed.

Direct. 5. If any come in that hath violated his Baptismal Covenant, by a wicked

life, he is before you Receive him, to give fome open testimony of his Repentance, (if his sinne were open) that so he may be Ministerially Absolved, and the Church receive him, not meerly as an Adult-Believer, but as a Convert, with Praiers and Rejoicing. And the fuller Confession he makes of his ungodly life, and of the way and Love of God in his recovery, and the fuller warning he giveth others of the sinnes that he was guilty of, and the fuller he communicateth to them the Satisfying Reasons that caused him to turne, the better it is, and more suitable to the state of a Penitent: as also the fullyer he professeth his Resolution to stick close to Chrift, by the help of his Grace, for the time to come.

Direct. 6. For the excecution of this, because all the People cannot be still ready, nor
attend, and because, it's fit they have some
cognisance of these things; let some of the
most sober, judicious persons, be chosen by
the Church (not into Office, but as their
Delegates, or Trustees) to meet with the
Pastours monthly in some convenient place,
where all persons may first address themselves that seek the Priviledges of the Church
(and where matters of Discipline may be first
transacted, before we bring them to the Assem-

bly yet not forbidding any other of the Church to be there present, that will. And either in that meeting may members after be admitted, and their names made publike at the next Communion; or else some meetings publikly appointed, soure times a yeare, or more, for admitting such in publike, as shall be sound fittes: which may be at a fast before a Sacrament. And let any of the Church (at that preparative meeting) have leave to put in what exceptions they have, against the person for his Prosession or Conversation.

Direct. 7. Let the Pastours and Churches that live within the reach of any Communis on, be as many as is possible, associate, and meet for the maintaining of Communion of Churches: (by their Officers, and Delegates) And those that differ in such tollerable matters, as may not hinder their Christian or Church Communion, and yet are not fatisfied to joyne in Synods with the reft, let them Agree upon such terms of Communion and Christian correspondence as their Principles will admit. And let no. Aranger be admitted to our Church communion, that bringeth not a Certificate (ealled of old Communicatorie Letters,) or some sufficient Testimony from one of these sorts (either

cither the Churches neerly Associated, one those that we agree to take for Brethren and those that bring such Certificates must be admitted by us, without any surther Try al, or Confirmation; unless there be some notable cause of suspition. But for those that live in Heretical, or Impious Societies, or such as resuse all Church order, and Communion with neighbour Churches, or are justly disowned by the Associated Churches, we should not admit them to our Communion, without a particular Tryal, or any better Certificate then those Churches can be give them. And thus should all the Churches be concatenated, and their Communion settled.

Direct. 8. Above all let every Minister see that he wisely and diligently carry himself to the rest of his Parish; avoiding indeed the excommunicate as Heathens: but for all that are willing to learne in an Expectant-state, let us deale lovingly, gently and tenderly with them, denying them nothing that lawfully we can yield them, in matters of Buryal, Marrying, Praying, Preaching, or the like. And be sure to carry on the Necessary duty of Catechizing, and personal Conference and Instruction with them, samily by samily, by which you may the better know them.

nem and prepare them for Church Commution, and have opportunity to quiet them, and answer their Objections; and they may the that you can them not off as Heathens, but only prepare them for the state and priviledges, which they are yet unfit for.

And especially let us by all possible conbefeension, meekness, loving carriage, lameless lives, and charitable contribution to the utmost of our abilities, endeadour to win them and take off that Offence, or t least abate it, or hinder the success of the eproaches of those, that will undoubtedly be offended, by our Resormation and Disciline. And let us have a vigilant eye upon my Seducers, especially Insidess and Papists hat may creep in among them, to take advanage of their discontents; that we may prulently and essectually counterwork them. This much faithfully done by Ministers, might he an admirable mercy to the Church.

He Peoples duty in order to this Reformation before mentioned, is, 1 Of the godly, and such as are fit for Church Communion: 2. Of the grossy ignorant and ungodly that are unfit.

1. The duty of the first fort lyeth in these

Parti-

Particulars. 1. They must highly value the benefit of Pastorall overfight and Church-Communion, and therefore be ready to promote any work of Resormation that is necessary, to their more fruitfull and comfortable enjoyment of them.

2. They must so behave themselves as may honour and further the work, and take heed of that by which it may be hindered; least they weaken our hands and be a flumbling block to others. For what can a Minister do himself, if the Church assist him not? much less if they hinder him? Especially, 1. They must take heed of scandalous sinnes, which may be a shame to their Profession, and open the mouthes of the enemies of the Church. 2. They must take heed of Sects and Divisions, and quarrellings among themselves, which will break them in pieces, or hinder their Edification, and make them a flumbling block to the weak, and a laughing flock to the wicked. 3. They must take beed of surlyness and pride, and domineering carriage towards those that are yet without: And must be as eminent in meekness, and humility, and patience, and forbearance, and felf-denval, as they are in the Profession of Religion. For a proud domineering spirit, or strangeness and unnecessary distance, doth lose the un-

godly,

odly, whom you should be means to win. . They must study to do all the good they in to those without; be as little as may be in xecuting penalties on them, and as much may be possibly, in speaking kindly and imiliarly to them, and relieving them in vants, and visiting them in sickness, and hink it not much to purchase their love, order to their Salvation, with the loss of our right, or with the price of much of our worldly goods. For all men love hose, or at least will less dislike them, that o no hurt to any, but do good to all, or s many as they can. To be the servants of all, is the highest Christian dignity, nd the way to winne them. 5. Take need of falling out, or contending with any of them, or of giving them any harsh, provoking words, to their faces, or behind their backs. But put up any wrong hat is meerly your own, and is in your power to forgive, for the sake of Peace, and your own neighbours good. 6. Be not men of common spirits, or common speech, or a common conversation: but as we must make a difference between you and others in our communion and Churchadministrations, so let the rest see that it is not without cause. For if you be but

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like other men, we shall seeme to be partial in making a difference, between you and other men. Let your Light therefore shine before men to the Glory of your Heavenly Father. Let them see that you despise the world, and live above it, and can eafily part with it; that you can forgive and bear a wrong; that your heart is in Heaven, and your treasure there; and that you are the heires of another world: Let all men heare and fee by you, that you have a higher designe in your eye, then the ungodly, and that you are driving on another trade, then the men that have their portion in this life. Heaven is your Real! Glory: and to be Heavenly is your true Reputative Glory, not only in the eies of the wife, but of the common earthworms of the world. 7. Set your felves in the most diligent and faithfull improvement of all your parts and Interests to help on the Work of God on mens Souls. Though you preach not, you have work enough in your own places to do, to further the Preachers work. Speake to poore people prudently, feafonably, and ferioully about the state of their Souls, and Everlafting Life: and confult with the Minifters, how to deale with them: Tell them

them in what state you find the people, and take their advice in further dealing. with them. O if our neighbours would out helpe us in private, and do their parts, ind not cast all the burden on the Miniter, there would much more be done then is! Nay, alas, to our grief and hindrance, ome of our Professing people are so hot, ind self conceited, and proud, that unless ve will outrunne our own understandings. nd be ruled by them, and shut out abunlance that the Word of God allows us not o shut out, and be Righteous overmuch, and thut up the Church of Christ, as in nut-shell; they presently murmure and ebell, and separate, and must betake themelvel to a stricter Congregation. And ohers of them, must have us cast off Dicipline, and cut up the hedge, and admit Il to the Communion and Priviledges of the Church, and a'l under a blind pretense of charity; and some Learned Gentlemen by vords and writings, do enrage our ignoant and ungodly neighbours against us, nd make them believe, that we do them ome grievous wrong, because we will not ideed deceive them and undo them, and fet p new Church-orders (or disorders) now the end of the world, so contrary to all the

the ancient Canons and Orders of the Church. I honour and deerly love the names of many of these studious, pious Gentlemen: But seriously I must tell them, that they want humility, and in their good meanings do the Church a world of wrong. And though they may be more learned even in Theology, then we, yet it is a great matter to have or to want experience. They have not been so much in Church-administrations as we, nor had so much to do with ignorant Souls. And verily I must say againe, that the bare Theory maketh but a bungler in this work: I must much suspect the Judgment o that man in matters of Church-government or dealing with poor Souls, that wants expe rience. Let these Gentlemen, but turn Mi nisters, (be it known to their faces, there' none of them too good for it, nor too great and let them but try our life a little while, an I shall set more by their Judgments, then no I do. I red many a Physicians writing before I was fit to attempt a Cure: It's raw deceitful kind of knowledg in these pr ctical affaires, that is not furthered by e perience.

2. And as for the duty of the ignorar angodly people, I shall say little of it, t cause I suppose they are not like to read

regard what I say. Only in general, it is their first duty, to become truly godly persons, and so to live in communion with the Church. But upon supposition that they will not yet be such, their next choice should be to live in quiet submission to their Teachers, and patiently stay among the Catechamens, and Expessants, till they are sit for a bigher place and Priviledges. And with the reasonableness of this motion, and how it conducts to their good, we should labour to acquaint them, and make them sensible of t, that they may be patient in their station.

Ur last work is to tell you, what is the Magistrates part, for the promoting of this work. And I shall urge them here to no great matters, because they shall not say, that we would either drive them in the darke upon questionable things, or put them upon that, which any reason can call bersecution, or make them think, that we can do nothing but by their sword. And therefore whether they should force people to be Church members, or Christians, or to come under Discipline, are Questions that this time I shall not meddle with; But

Dir. A. I. It is a great part of the Magi

In Tertullians daies, saich Albaspinaus in Tert. de prescrip. c. 41. p. 306. The Catechumeni being fomewhat inffructed at home, cum exteris tandein Ecclesia primis concionibus que in graciam Catechumenorum babebantur, intererant; quibus peractis rursus omnes iidem ipfi Catechumeni ex templo discedere jubebantur, ne scilicet Divina mysteria rudium conscientia poliuerentur - So that it seemes they had then in the morning a Sermon fitted for the Catechumens, and all the after part of the worthip, was more Eucharistical fitted to the Communion

strates Duty to cause the people that are yet unfi for Church-communion to keep in their visible sta tion, and to behave them selves as Expectants, an submit to that Instructio of their Teachers, which is necessary to prepare there for the Priviledges of the Church: and to this En a the Magistrate should by Laws and Proclamation L own this Ministerial Relati formation. Alas how li live tle knew they, what the ing did, that have so lon 1 been jealous of us, lest william would do too much, ar ob under pretence of Discipol pline enflame, or abu Wor them by severity? Whele or as it is a work that castel Ma us on so much rage ar low hatred, of rich and pool they

and calls for such abundance of Faith ar Chin Zeale, and diligence and self-denial, whites we have so little, and are commonly like others

men addicted too much to man-pleasing, and to fave our selves, that if we had all the help that Magistrates can give us, it's ten to one but we should leve the most of this work undone. Preaching is a very cheap and cafy work, in comparison of Church Government. They have taken great pains to stop poor, lazy; short winded men from runling up the steepest hill, and carrying the heaviest burden, and passing through the greatest sufferings, that in those prosperous ntimes we can expect. And indeed I know it bto be true, that for all the countenance of Authority, he that will faithfully execute ethe Pastoral Oversight and Discipline, shall dive a persecuted life, which by meer Preachling he might avoid.

Therefore the chief Governours of the Nation ought to make Laws, and cause them ato be executed, for the constraining of the light of the privately Catechised, and to submit to the privately Catechised, and Instructed by the Ministers: and to command them patiently into waite, as learners in this Condition, till othey are fit to be Approved members of the Church. These carnal people look more at the sword, and will of the Magistrate, in matters of Religion, then others do; because they

they understand no other argument, and car favour nothing but the things of the flesh Did but the Rulers of the Nation heare how they daily enquire what Religion shall be owned and fetled by them, they would fure think it their duty, to lend them a little more of their help. We desire you not to drive them to Christianity, nor to Sacraments 18 or Church-Communion: only drive them to heare, and learne, and be instructed, that the Light of Truth may do the reft. Surely none can reasonably suspect, that this is a painst the Liberty of their Consciences, un. less the slavery of Satan be their Liberty: and it be their Liberty to be free from Christ, IN and Righteousness, and Heaven. It's hard to believe that Governour to be a Christian 100 that will not do this much to help his Subjects a to be Christians.

Direct. 2. And as the Magistrate should constraine such People to Submit to be Instructed, so should be constraine the Ministers to Instruct them, both by publike preaching, and by private conserence and Catechizing, if they be able: and if through the greatness of the place, one Minister is not able to perform it, there should be so many maintained proportionably, to the number and necessities of Souls, as may be able.

The

The Reason why Ministers themselves should be compelled by Penalties are, 1. First because some are so dull, that they need the spur. 2. Because our performances will be the less resisted by the people, when they know we are forced by the Magistrate. 3. Because the Magistrates Judgment puts much authority and honour on the work, in the peoples cies: compel us therefore, as well as them.

Direct. 3. The Magistrate should also impose a penalty upon all that undertake to be Pastours of a Church, and administer the Lords Supper, and yet will not make any necessary Tryal of the Knowledg, Faith, and Lives of those, to whom they do administer it, nor exercise any Church Discipline on the Candalous; but utterly neglect that Overfight and Church-Government, which is as nuch a part of the Pastoral work, as publike breaching is. They that will undertake to be Pastours, and meddle with Sacraments, must be compelled to do the work of Pa-Hours, and to dispense the Sacraments in a ollerable order. Though yet we are not or compulsion in any doubtfull points, of effer moment, where a difference among the Godly may be tollerated: But that Pafours should act as no Pastours, and ReAors of the Churches be as no Rectors, and should cherish all ignorance, infidelity, and impiety, and profane Gods Ordinances, and subvert the Communion of Saints, and lay the Garden of Christ open to the common wilderness, and thereby make all seeme fingular to the people, that will not do as wickedly as these; this is not to be tolerated; but the Commissioners for ejecting scandalous Ministers, with the advice of the Assiflants, should have power to correct them, and in case of obstinate unresormedness to eject them: Not to silence them from preaching to the Catechumens or any; but to prohibite them from the actions proper to Church Rulers or Pastours, till they will performe them more agreeably to the Scripture Rule.

And this compulsion also of the Ministers, we desire especially for the peoples sake, who we are content should be excused themselves from any such penal Laws, to restraine them from Sacraments; but when they know that Ministers are under such penalties, they will beare it at their hands, and take it the better, when we deale with them, as the Word of God requireth. I heare it with my eares, he to the grief of my heart, how some of my seighbour Ministers are spoken against, with my

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bitterness by their people, because they give not the Lords Supper to all, even to the most ignorant and ungodly, that refuse to be instructed: or so much as to take themselves for any members of the Ministers charge: And that which they fay is, that though Bi-Bops and Common Prayer be taken down, yet the giving of the Sacrament to all the Parish. is not taken down. And they that now submit fo quietly to the disusing of many other things, because Ministers are punishable if they use them, would also do the lke in this case. And yet if you are jealous, that Ministers will go as far on the other hand, in refuling the people that are not to be refused. (though with one of an hundred, there's little feare of that) we are contented that you looke to us also in this: To which end these two things will be sufficient. 1. Let the Magistrace joyne with the Pastours and Delegates of the Church in their meetings, where Church affaires are transacted, that he may see what we do. If there be no Ju-Rice of Peace in the Parish, let every Church have a Church-Magistrate purposely chosen by the chief Magistrate; or some Agent on his behalf deputed hereunto. 2. And let the Magistrates Agent acquaint the Commissionlers how things are transacted, in cases of ComComplaint, and let them by the advise of the Assistant Ministers, correct us as we deserve, if you should imagine this to be ne-

cessary.

Direct. 4. The Magistrate should promote, encourage, countenance, yea com M mand the Pastours to Affociations and Brotherly correspondencies, for the more cau & telous, and vigorous, and effectual manage 10 ment of these works; and for the concatena and tion and Communion of Churches, and then right understanding of each others affaires in that he that hath Communion in one Church may by Communicatory Letters, have Com munion in any of the rest; and he that is called or kept out of one, may not be received by the rest, till it be proved that he is excluded av unjustly. And those that joyne not so fully as the rest, may yet be provoked to own one another, as farre as they can; that fo with may maintaine brotherly Love, with all thank differ from us by tollerable defferences; and may own them as Churches, though we can not own their different opinions or waies and may have such Communion with them, and we may, and upon their Letters may admiren their members to our Communion. Throng the Magistrate should at least openly present voke, and encourage the Churches and Page ftour

stours to; seeing no man can doubt whether it be for the edification of the Church.

Direct. 5. For the better promoting of this Necessary work, I conceive it would be a very ready and unquestionable way, for the Magistrate to appoint an able, Godly, moderate Minister, to be a Visiter in each County, or rather in each half or quarter of County, to fee the Churches thus Reformed, and prvoke the several Pastours to their dury, and affift them in it, where there is need: But not to have any Episcopal power to punin, or cast out any Minister, or excommupicate them, suspend them, or the like: But et every Visitor have an Agent of the Mahistrate joyned with him, armed with autholity to convent the Ministers, and examine witnesses, and do what more the chief Magistrate shall see meet, so that still these two Visitors go together, but have not the same Authority or work; but let the Minister onby enquire, direct, exhort, and give acount and advice to the civil Visiter; and let the civil Visiter have all the Coercive Power: and let both of them transmit such causes as re exempt from their determination, to the commissioners for ejecting scandalous. Minioifters, who by the advise of the Affistant Ministers may determin them. These Visi-

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ters did very much to the first and great Reformation of Scotland, when Popery had everrun all: Nor did they Scruple the using of them, for all that they were against Prelacy.

Direct. 6. It is one of the chief and unquestionable parts of the Magistrats duty, in order to the Reformation and Peace of the

In the Ancient Church the Catechumeni were not fuffered to fit with the Church-members, but had a separated place by themselves; and Tertullian accuseth the Hereticks for breaking this order, ut vid. Albaspin, in Tertul. de Prascription. c. 41. p. 306. He blames them alfo that they fuffered them to joyne with the Church in Praiers, and other holy Worship ut Albaspin. ibid.

Churches, and the faving of mens Souls; to fee that dangerous Seducers be restrained, from infecting and carrying away the ignorant, ungodly, discontented people, that are kept under Ministeria 1 Teaching, as Expectants I do not move to have to men driven into out for Churches: Nor do I move to have an unnecessary re straint laid upon men tongues or pens, in cally of tollerable differences in among the Servants of Christ. In this case I only pr desire now, that the Dis m

fenting Godly Brethren, would agree to mether, to meddle with their differences no

more then needs, and to manage their Difagreements with such Cautions, and in such manner, and feason, and measure, as may least hinder their success in the common work, viz. the promoting of the common Fundamental Verities, and the converting and faving of the Ignorant and ungodly, and getting down the reigning sinnes of the world. And then they will find, 1. That if there be any truth in the private Opinions, which they would propagate, it will farre easier be received, when the minds of their brethren are sedate and peaceable, then when they are allarmed to the conflict, by unleafonable preaching for the faid Opinions. 2. And that the Errours (of this lower nature among Brethren) which some feare a tolleration of, will sooner die of themselves for want of fewel in such Peaceable deportment, then when the bellowes of opposition, contradiction, reproach, and violence are blowing them up, and putting life continually into them. For most Dividers are proud and felfish, and must needs be noted, for somewhat extraordinary: And you take the principal way to animate them, when you make so much ado with them: Whereas a few yeares neglect, and not observing them, as if there were no fuch men in the world ... (unless when they impose a Necessity on us) would more happily extinguish them. I speak but what I have seen and tryed. This therefore is not the matter of my present request, that Magistrates would use rigor and violence with godly men, about tollerable differences; which the Power of greater Light and Love in the contrary minded, is

the principal means to reconcile.

But the thing requested now of Magistrates is, that they would keep out the Wolves, while we are feeding the Sheep. or help us in it. That they suffer not damnable deceivers, or any that plainly go about to subvert mens Souls, or the state of the Church, to fall in with our Ignorant, ungodly people, in the time of their Learning and Expectancy. And as I shall be ready against any Libertine, Infidel, or Papist in the world, to prove this to be in the Magiftrates Power, and his flat duty (of which I hope no sober Christian doubteth) so I shall here lay before the Magistrate, the Reafons that shall evince the need of his help. in the present case.

Reason I. The people that we now speak of, are so utterly ignorant, that it's easy to deceive them. It's no dishonour to Truth, that a soole, or a child my be deluded: but

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means of Reformation and Reconciliation, 303

uch are not to be left to the malice and craft

of jugling enemies.

Reason 2. So wicked are the hearts of hose, that we now speak of (or many of hem) that they are prepared for Deceir, and willing of it Materially, though not Formally, as such. It's easy drawing men from that which they hate, or their hearts are bent against, and to that which they Love, and their hearts are set upon. Such gunpoweler will soon take fire.

Reason 3. Our people by the foremenioned work of Reformation, will unloubtedly be cast into Discontents: They vill be forely displeased with their Teachrs; which is a small matter, were it not hat it hindreth their own Salvation. They have fo long been used to have their own will, and to be admitted even in Heathenish Ignoance and Impiety to the Communion of the saints, and all the outward Priviledges. without any confiderable exercise of Discibline over them, that now it will be a strange provoking thing to them, when their cufrom shall be altered. So that in the disconent and hatred of their minds, if Infidels, or Papists, or any such Malignant adversa. ies shall come among them, their own malignity and discontent, will drive them by multimultitudes into their nets; and they will turn to the first that comes with any plausible though pernicious doctrine. With half an eie we may easily see this: And therefore, if the Migistrate will not help us to quiet and secure the people, and keep off deceivers, while we are Catechising, and Instructing, and Preparing the grossy Ignorant and ungodly, it will be to the hazard of many thousand souls, and a temptation to many fainthearted Ministers, againe to cast open the hedge, and lay the Churches Communion common, for seare of the ill consequence, that will follow to the people by displeasing them.

And yet I may well conclude, that though fill the Church will have need of some of the Magistrates help in this same way, yet nothing so much hereafter, as at first. I It is Curfom that most holdeth the people now, and enrageth them against the breakers of it. And when once the Custom is broken and turned, they will be much more quiet. 2. We now find the Churches in the rubbish, and have the harshest work at first to do, which will soone be over; and the Churches and minds of men more settled. 3. A sew yeares Practise of Confirmation, in the foredescribed way, I hope will introduce such abundance

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f Knowledg, and so increase the sace of sodliness, that we shall have little need of the Magistrates helpe, in this kind as now the have. But now at first our Necessity is

ery great.

Reason 4. Moreover, our Doctrine and ractice is most contrary to mens sinnes, and carnall Interest, and therefore though it True, yet it is Provoking, and seemeth to be against them; as blood letting, Faing, and bitter medicines to a Child, or soolish Patient. And therefore no wonder, if tolerated Seducers can draw them omit, by sence or non-sence, in such a see. A little Reason seemes to take men from that, which seemes against them, or high they hate.

Reason 5. On the contrary, the Dorine and Practice of Deceivers, is suited their nature, and purposely sugered for em by Art. For Instance: If Papists fall with them in the depth of their disconnt, and first raile at us as no Ministers, it Lyars and Hereticks; and then revile for receiving maintenance (which is their hy, though their Clergie receive so exedingly much more) and then tell them all their Ancestours, and then set them all their Ancestours, and then set opens

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operato, will certainly conferre grace, and shall take up at the strictest with an Auricuar Confession, instead of necessary humiliation and true Church-Discipline; and shall make those veniall, and improper sinnes, which we make damnable; and shall fend many but to Purgrtory, that according to Scripture, we fend to Hell. In a word, when they shall comply with carnal hearts and Interests, but as much, as Montalte the Jan. Cenian sheweth us, that the Jesuites do what wonder if our Ignorant, discontented people, do greedily swallow such baits a these, and turn to such a kind of Religiousness And this makes the Jesuites glad of our Re formation, and fland by us as the Crows b Sheep, that they may have our leavings or all that we cut off: For it's Number the they regard; and if they will but believe the Pope, they shall be welcom to them yea, be Catholikes and be faved, thous they believe not in Christ and the Hol Ghoft, nor know not what Christianity He that thinks I wrong them: 1. Let the

* In his Deus, natura Gratia: where abundance more are cited of his fide.

look on millions, a millions in their Churces. 2. Let him but ru * Fr. a Santta Cla Problem. 15, & 16.

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Reason 6. The Adversaries also are very dustrious, and have many advantages of s from without. In most Churches they vill meet, though with Godly, yet with oung, unexperienced Disputers; because ur Ministery is but Reviving, and the oung ones must have time to grow. And ne Jesuites, Fryars and other Missioners, ave a Pope and Cardinals, and Bishops, and rinces, and Lords, and Revenews, and ealth, and Seminaries, and trayned Solers in abundance, at their backs beyond. ea, to furnish them with continual suply. And how eager and busy they are, e Christian world hath had long experince: so that if such be let loose on Ignorant ouls, what wonder if they prevaile?

Reason 7. And for the Event, if the agistrates shall resuse us this Reasonable and questionably lawfull aide, it may be the eans of the damnation of many thousand uls. I suppose I speak to Christians, that lieve that sinne is the poyson of the Soul, d believe that Faith in Christ is necessary, d that there is a Heaven and a Hell: And so, they must needs understand, what it to suffer men to draw their Subjects of Christ, from Scripture, from the anes of Grace, and a Holy Life; and

to draw them into sinne: that this is but to give men leave to do their worst, to undo and damne as many as they can; and to take them at the greatest vantage in their Igno. rance and discontent to trip up their heels, and tife them into Hell. How dreadfull a thing is this to a Magistrate, once to think of that hath but any belief of Scripture, and pitty on the Souls of men. And therefore (as long as we do not now call upor them, so much as to force Papists, or Infi dels either to be of our Religion, or to pro fels that they are so, or joyne in Communi on with us, but only defire, that they may keep their venom to themselves, and mal not be suffered to take the advantage of or peoples Ignorance and Discontent) ui doubtedly the Rulers that are friends Christ, and the Souls of men, will n ver find in their hearts, to deny this al

Reason 8 And if they should deny it, Reason they must needs see, that they we fully give up the Churches of Christ, the are under their government, to distract and consustion. They know well enough the would come of it, if every man had bet liberty to perswade their Armies is Mutinies and Rebellion; or to perswade

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Subjects against themselves, that Rule them; or to entice mens Children, or servants to lewdness, or their wives to unchastity. And will they, under pretence of Mercy or Liberty, permit men to do that against Christ, and the Church, and the Souls of many that are bad enough already, which they would not, they durst not permit against mens bodies, or against themselves, or against the Peace of the Common-wealth.

And what a dishonour will it be to Christ, to the Church, and Reformation, and Religion; and what a joy to all the Enemies of these, to see that our Resormation shall breed such Confusion, and bring upon us such inconveniencies? And all because the Magi-

leate shall refuse his help.

Reason 9. And perhaps, the Magistrates will quickly find, that the Distractions of he-Church will breed, and feed such Distractions in the Common-wealth, as may nake them wish they had quenched the fire, while it was yet quenchable. Our Unity snot only Our strength, but their strength, specially if they promote it. Our Divisions reason us as well as them. What will the lagistrate do, if he help us not in this site? Ministers cannot in Conscience alaies forbeare their Duty, but will set about X 3

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it? Either the Rulers will suffer us to do it, or not: If they suffer us and assist us, it will be our Peace and theirs, and our peoples good: If they suffer us and assist us not, as is now defired, we shall exasperate so many of their Sujects by our Reformation, and shutting them from Church Communion. that will shake the Peace of the Commonwealth, and the Odium will fly on the Governours, for fetting up a Ministry that fo provoketh them, and so the people will be still in Discontents, and prepared for Rebellion, or any violent change. And the fire that begun in the Church, if it be let alone, may reach the Court. But if to mend this, they will put down or hinder Ministers, their persecution will bring Gods Judgments on them, and turn the hearts of honest, sober men against them. They have seen what Deformation and persecution have done, before their eies.

Reason 10. Lastly, it will bring a most heavy Guilt on the Magistrates Soul, which he will never be able to stand under, before the King of all the world. To be Guilty of the neglect of an Office so Divine, received from God, that it might be used for him; free and to be Guilty of the frustrating of much with of our Ministerial work; and of grieving the standard control of the standard c

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hearts of so many that seare God, and frustrating such hopes as we lately had, (to say nothing of the Prayers, teares, hazards, blood, and ruine of so many thousand, and the promises, oaths and Covenants to God) to be guilty of the sinnes of so many thousand, and of their everlating Condemnation; to be guilty of the distractions, and betraying of the Church, and cause, and people of the Lord, and to be guilty of the insultings of so many Enemies, all this and much more, that would certainly follow the denial of this moderate necessary help, would be a burden intollerable.

Direct. 7. But because both the Magidrates, and many others are askaid, lest by going too far in such assistance, they may be guilty of Persecution, by restraining nen from Preaching, or private peswasion, or by keeping the Ignorant and wicsed from Church-Communion, or by compelling them to come to heare, and to be personally Instructed, I humbly propound these following things, for such a Reguation of their granted Liberty, as may ree them from all danger of persecuting, without depriving us of their principall selp.

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- 1. If you compel not the Ignorant and ungodly to heare, and be peronally Instructed, by the Minister of the Parish where they live, yet at least compel them thus to submit to some Minister: and let that Minister certific under his hand, that he takes care of him as a Catechumene, or Expectant, by publike and private Instruction.
- 2. Let not every man that will, be tolerated either to Teach, perswade, or hold Assemblies; but let your Toleration be Regulated, as well as your Approbation is. To which end 1. Let such persons as are thought meet for such a worke, be appointed as Comissioners, to Approve, or Julge of such as shall be Tolerated through th: Land, as the Commissioners now Approved of such, as shall have the publike maintenance. For there is no Reason, that the Tollerated should not go under Tryal as well as the Allowed. And indeed with out some such course to keep the Doors of Toleration, as well as the doore of pub like Allowed Teachers, you cannot put any reasonable Laws for Toleration in Execu tion; but any will come in, what eve your Law say. 2. Let these Commission ers for Trying the Tolerated, have Rule giver

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given them by the Lawgivers, whom to Licence, or Tolerate, and whom not.

3. Let all that will gather Assemblies, or administer Sacraments, or Preach, have an Instrument of Toleration, under the hands and seale of these Commissioners, and let them be hindered, that have no such Instrument. Otherwise if you say till they are convict of Blasphemie, they may do more mischief first, (for who will persecute them) then ever the Magistrate can comfortably be accountable to God for suffering.

7. When a man hath a fealed Toleration, to Preach, or hold Assemblies, let him yet be as liable to any just Accusation, before the Commissioners for Ejection, as the Approved, publike Ministers are: That so if he be proved to be wicked and scandalous, or to preach any thing excepted from Toleration, by the Legislatours, the said Commissioners may be Authorized, to deprive them of their Toleration, as they do others of their publique station and maintenance. And this is a most Rersonable and necessary thing.

1. For else the Publike Ministers will be hardlier dealt with then they. It is supposed that there's so much difference in the

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foundess of their Doctrine, that one deferveth the publike encouragement, as well as the other deserveth a Toleration: Or else the Law givers, would make no difference. And that being supposed, if they shall not be questionable, as well as we, nor their Right forseitable as well as ours, they are more cherished proportionably then others.

2. And if you do not this, it's as good of do nothing, but openly License Heathens, and Papists, and all Blaspheamers: For they will make a faire Consession, till they have got their seald Toleration, and then

I humbly propound it to the Confideration of the Soveraigne Rulers, whether it be not fit. that the Testimonies of these two forts of men, in any weighty case, against another be invalidate. And is it not a pittifull case that the lives of the godly people whom they have, shall be at the mercy of any two of these preach contrary to that the profession. Two forts we all know this to be true by: in I. Papists, that are for Equivocation, and Mental Reservation, in their Professions and Oathes: or for the Popes to dispense with them. 2. Heathens and Insidels that believe not, that there is any siane, or Devil, or Hell, or Heaven, and therefore care not what they sweare. And indeed these

hefe are the two Sects wretches, that make hat now are up: and all other are like to fall into hefe. Alas by fad expe-

no more of an oath then of ano-

ience I speake it: Those that will openly. ind to my face make an Orthodoxe confesion, do fecretly harden many poor Souls, y making a scorne of Scripture, as a fable, ind of the Immortality of the Soul, and of Christ and the Holy Ghost, and Heaven ind Hell, and fay all these are nothing. out the inventions of men, and that the Chave-Priests do perswade men that there re Devils, and Hell, as a bugbeare to nake them do what they would have them, nd all Religion is but deceit. Such Heabens, are the predominant Sect in many places, and higher in England, then once thought to have seen them. And if all uch perfidious Infidels and Jesuites, shall lave leave to Blaspheame God, Christ, and scripture, because they once made an Orhoeoxe Profession, then let Hell be turned oose upon our people, and the Devil that vas bound up from deceiving the Nations, have a Toleration from the Magistrate to do his worft.

Thus I have shewed that Magistrates, if hey will, may helpe the Church without

any danger of persecuting the Truth, if they take not Popery, damnable Heresie, and Heathenism for Truth. 1. If the Approver keep the doore of Toleration, as well as o Publike Maintenance and Ministry. 2. If a Church Justice, or Civil Agent, do keep the Churches Peace. 3. If the Civil Visiter do purposely take cognisance of the state o Parishes, and see the Laws put in executi on. 4. If the Commissioners for Ejections have power of Judging all Seducers, and Blaspheamers, as well as the publike Mini sters. And if these only have the Coercivi Power; but some able, chosen, godly Mi nisters be joyned with them for Advice an Exhortation: as Magistrates and Minister fate together before the daies of William th Conquerour.

Joh. 13. 17. If ye know these things happy are ye if ye do them. Luke 12. 47. And the servant which knew his Lords will and prepared not, nor did according to b.

will, shall be beaten much.

Finitur Hebr. 13. 1648.

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Aug. 29. Postscript. 1698

READER,

S great and needfull a duty as this is that I have here proposed, and as clear as it is, and commonly agreed on by all the Parties before mentioned. I am yet far from expecting, that all men should acknowledg it and obey it; or that no person of contrary apprehensions or intentions, should rife up against it as an enemy, with all the strength that the meafure of his wit and passions can prepare. We cannot speak for God himself, for Christ, for Scripture, for mens own Salvation, but we meet with contradiction and resistance. even from them that we would fave. And were it not for this, what bleffed work would the Gospel make? and why might we not hope, that all our people should be saved? No wonder then, if when ever we at. tempt Reformation or Reconciliation, we meet with Learned, Reverend Brethen that come against us, armed with plausible cavils, and contempts, and cast away the medicine as dangerous, or mis.

Nunquam enim. ait Lutherus periclitatur Ecclesia nisi inter Reverendiffi-

ungratefull, and strenuously vindicate the Disease that should be healed: And were it not that the Church hath many, very many such , what should have kept us unhealed so long? And who could have continued our deformities and divisions, and frustrated such means as have been used for our cure? Satan is not so poore a Politician, as to be without his Agents in our Ecclefiastike Armies, and Councils, and Pulpits to speak for his cause and do his work, and resist and fruftrate that which would displease him; and all this under pretence of enmity to Satan, and friendship to Christ, and a better doing of his work. As the names of the chiefest of Christ Servants, were not cast out as Holy. but as evil, Luk, 6. 22. So their Doctrine was not cast out as Truth, nor as Saving. but as Deceit. And his Meanes will not be openly refifted, (at least by those that are building with us) as Reforming or Reconciling, but as groundless or unproved, or troubleseme, or unscasonable, or as suspected of fome ill designe, or event. Some will say, it is meere Prelacie, or a Prelatical designe: and some that it is Independancie, or an Independant designe: and some that it is but Presbyterian Examination. Whereas they might know, that it is proper to none of them.

them, which is common to them all. If it be Prelacie, how comes it to be found with Independents? If it be Independency, how comes it to be approved by Prelates, and Presbyterians? Is it not rather like Christianity it self, and the Truths and Duties which we commonly own; and therefore not to be appropriated to any.

By all that I have heard and read of late, concerning this Subject, I understand that he principal Objections that are likely to be need against the Doctrine of this Treatise, are

hele following.

Object. We were all Baptized in our Infan-, and therifore are Church-members, and have Right to the Priviledges of the Adult, when we are Adult, without any new Title or Condition: Our first Right continueth, though we never make Profession of the Christian Faith, nor personally renewed the Covenant with God that we made in Baptism. And berefore though in some cases, such an approved Profession be a duty, yet is not any more Necessary to our Church state, and Right to he Communion of the Adult, then that We vereborne Church-members, and so Bapticed. Nothing but Heresie, Schisme, or Apostacie can cut us eff. And therefore all bat were Baptized, and are not thus cut eff, are still Church members, and have Right to all the Ordinances in the Church.

Answ. 1. I have said enough to this already to satisfie the considerate impartial Reader; proving the Necessity of a personall Faith before God, and of some Profession of it Ecclesia Judice, before the Church, to the Being of the said Title of the Adult, as its Condition: and that all Scripture-Examples do make for the Confirmation of this Truth. Moreover let me adde, to answer the new, or foreseen affaults.

1. If there be no word of Promise in the Scripture, that giveth the Priviledge of Adult-Communion to any, upon their Infant title-condition only, nor any example in the Gospel, or the ancient Church, that any possessed or used that Priviledg upon that Title-condition only, then are we not to imagine that the Infant Title-condition alone is sufficient to the said Priviledge; But the Antecedent is true; as hath in part been may nifested, and will be more, when the Dif fenter shall bring forth his pretended Evi dences, by which his Title should be pro-

2. The Title-condition of Infants is no fufficient to make any morally capable of th Ends of Adult-Communion: therefore it

not sufficient to make them capable of a proper, plenary Right to such Communion. For the Right and Relation are for these Ends: if a natural incapacity may confik with a Plenary Title, so cannot a Moral. No man can really possels and exercise the Communion of the Adult intrinsically without Faith, or extrinsecall without Profession of Faith: sherefore no man without Faith or Profesfion of Faith, can have a plenary Right to that Communion. For a man to have a plenary Right to praise God, and celeberate with the Church the memorial of our Redemption, and participate of the Redeemer, and his Benefits, that believeth not in him, is a palpable absurdity.

3. If the meer Title-Condition of Infants will serve is foro Ecclesia, for the Adult, then it will serve also in foro Dei: For the Church looks but to the outward appearance, or visibility of that, whose Reality and sincerity God expecteth. And it is Gods Covenant that giveth us our Right: and therefore if the Church find us to have true Right, it must find us receiving it from Gods Covenant; and therefore find us the heires of the promise: The Reason why the Church takes our Brth-Priviledges for a sufficient Title Condition, is because God is supposed

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fo to take it. But that this will not serve the Adult in foro Dei is manifest; because God will not own such Insidels, as neither have Faith, nor a Prosession of it.

4. If the Title-Condition of Infidels may ferve them when Adult, then is there no personal difference in acts or, qualities; no not so much as in Profession, required on our part, to distinguish Christians from Infidels and Atheists: (required I mean as necessary Conditions) But the Consequent is absurd: therefore so is the Antecedent. If no differencing character between Actual Believers and Infidels or Atheists, be made thus necessary, then the Church and the the Infidel world, are laid together; and the Body of Christ, and consequently Christ himself is dishonoured, and blaspheamed, as common and uncleane. But if any personal difference be necessiry, it must be the personal Profession of Christianity, or nothing lesse then this can be it. For our Birth-Priviledge cannot be it. Atheists and Infidels are borne of Christian Parents. Much of the Turkish Army of Janizaries, have their Birth-Priviledges to shew, as well as we It is a probable Argument: Such an Infant is horne of Christian Parents: therefore he will be an Altual Believer. But it is not a probable

r alel or ales.

bable Argument, Such a man at age, that professeth not Christianity, had Christian Parents; therefore he is a believer: much less; therefore he had Right to the Benefits of the Covenant, whether he be an Astual Believer or not. If Christians have no visible note, by which they must be known from Insidels, then either the Church is not Visible, or Insidels may be the Visible Church, without so much as disowning their Insidelity.

5. If the Title Condition of Infants may fuffice the Adult for Church-Right and Communion, then Hereticks and Apostates have fuch Right: But the Consequent is denyed by them that I now dispute with. They confels that Heresie and some Schism, and Apoflacie, do cut off from the Church, and so from this Right. But it's plaine that such Hereticks and Apostates have that which was their Infant Condition: as they were the feed of Believers in Infancy, fo they are fince Apostacy: They cease not to be the feed of Belevers, by their renouncing Christ. If this therefore would prove a Right in filent Infidels., it will prove a Right in profest Apostates.

Object. The Apostates cast away their

Right, and therefore have it not.

Answ. 1. Either it dependeth on their

own wills when they come to age, or not. If it do not, then they cannot cast it away. They may refuse to use their Right, but they cannot cast it away, or nullifie it: For they cannot make themselves not to be the Children of Christian Parents. The foundation flands whether they will or no: and therefore so must the Relation. But if the Relation or Right do now depend upon their own wills, then our cause is granted; for from their wills then must the Condition, or Evidence be fetcht. 2. Yea such persons, ordinarily as we have now in question, are actual Apostates, and are so to be taken by the Church: and therefore not to be taken as Church members, having Right to Sa-craments. He that being engaged to God the Father, Sonne, and Holy Ghost in his Infancy, doth make no Profession of actual Faith at full age, is ordinarily to be taken for an Apostate: But such are the persons in question. I say Ordinarily, because I except them that have been cast upon natural impossibilities or impotency, or wanted a call and opportunity: that is, all persons that prove Ideots, or deafe and dumbe, or otherwise dest tite of natural capacity; such come not to the use of Reason and free-will, and therefore are not bound to Actual beleif.

Such also as have their tongues cut out, are separated from Humane society, or otherwife disabled from Profession. But for the common case of mankind. 1. It is plaine that they have their tongues given them by nature to express their minds; and 2. That Christ commandeth Confession with the tongue, and professing him before men. 3. That much of his Worship lieth in holy Profession, and all of it containeth answerable Profession. 4. That we have constant calls from God, even to profess our Christianity: the godly and the wicked that live among us call us to it: we have daily invitations to profess our Christianity one way or other. And among all these occasions of Profession, he that Professeth not, is to be taken for an Infidel and Apostate. For the business is so exceeding great and weighty, and the Object so glorious, and the duty so incumbent, and the very Life of Christianity so inconsistent with a non-profession, that we have just reason to conclude, that he that Professeth not himself a Christian, ordinarily is to be taken for none by the Church.

Object. But though at the first admitting of a forrainer into a Common wealth, you require an Oath of fidelity, or Profession of Y 3

subjection, yet when we are borne Subjects, we must be supposed to continue such, till we Rebel, and so declare the contrary; and our

fidelity is not to be questioned.

Answ. 1. The case doth exceedingly differ from ours in hand. Princes vary their Commands as their affaires require. If you are borne in the midst of a peaceable Republike, you may perhaps have no oath of fidelity imposed, because the Peace of the Commom-wealth requireth it not: For while there is no enemy neer you, to folicite you to rebellion or treason, or with whom you may conjoyn, it is supposed, that you have either no mind, or no power to it. And it is only the common peace that is concerned in the cause. But our case is otherwise: For we live among Devils and wicked men, and are known to have hearts our felves, that are naturally treacherous, and at enmity to God. So that we are still among enemies, that would seduce us, and with whom we are enclined to take part. And besides that, our Profession is not only necessary to the common safety, but to our personal persormances, and daily Communion with the Saints, and worthip of God. 2. If it be in a Garison that's neer the enemy, or in a Country that is inclined to Rebellion, or where Re-

bellion is on foot, and the enemy hath a party, there Princes use to cause all their Subjects to take an oath of fidelity; and ordinarily also in peaceable Kingdoms this is practifed : At fuch an age all persons are to take an oath of Allegiance, or fidelity, or to make Profession of their subjection, in many places: and in other places they do it, before they enter upon any office. And if you will come neerer the case, and suppose that men were borne in a Schoole, or an Army, as well as a Republike, I think you would yield, that when they come to age, it is neceffary that they have more then their Birthe Priviledg to fhew, to prove them Schollars. or Soldiers. We are Christs Disciples and Soldiers, as well as his Subjects; and one is as effential to our Christianity as the other. We may be initiated into his School and Army in our Infancy, and so stand Related to him: But sure we are Apostates, if when we come to age, we have nothing to shew but our meer Infant-Condition; and to more we must be called. 3. The case also differeth in this: Princes do make known to all in their Laws, that no man that is an enemy, yea or that is not (protempore) a Subject, shall dwell on their Soile, among their Subjects: They fuffer not Subjects and Enemies to live pro-Y 4 miscuously miscuously together in their dominions : and therefore it is supposed that a mans very abode and residence in their land, is a profession of Subjection: much more when they live in obedience to the Laws, and hold their estates by them. But Christ dealeth not thus: He suffereth Believers and Infidels to live together, and his flock to be but little in the world; so that it cannot be the least presumption, that a man is a Christian, because he liveth among Christians. 4. At least let us not teach Christ, what he should have done, when we find he hath done otherwise; we find that he requireth personall Faith and profession of all atage, that are naturally capa-ble; and therefore we must perform it, and not give reasons why we should not do it. No good Subject that's called to profess his fidelity will refuse, and say, you have no reason to question me, and put such a Tryall or obligation upon me.

So that I may conclude, that an Adult perfon not professing Christianity is not a visible Christian, notwithstanding his birth-priviledges: and therefore not a visible Churchmember; and therefore an Apostate, seeing he was once engaged in Covenant to Christ, (though not an Apostate from actual Faith) and therefore such as hath no proper right to

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Church communion and priviledges.

Object. If his Infant Title be cut off, it is either by Ignorance, Wickednesse, Heresie, or Schism, or Apostacie: but ignorance and wickednessed not cut him off; and Heresie, Schism, or Apostacie he is not guilty of; therefore, &cc.

Ansiv. 1. His Infant Title will cease of it self without any other cutting off, if it be not continued by his personall actual believing, when he comes to capable age. His birth-priviledges alone, or his Parents dedicating him to God in Baptism, will serve no longer of it self. It is therefore for want of Personal Faith Coram Deo, and of the profession of Faith Coram ecclesia, that his right doth cease.

2. Ignorance, where it proveth Infidelity, must needs prove a Cessation of the Infant Title, when they come to a capable age, and ignorance is privative. He that knoweth not, that there is a God, a Christ, or what he hath done for us, or what a Christian is, can have no Faith in God, or Christ; and therefore is an Atheist, and an Insidell privatively, is at a capable age, among meanes at least. It is not only he that denyeth Christ, that is an Insidell, but he that never heard of him, Negatively at least; and he that having heard of him, understood not what he heard, and therefore believeth not in him, because he knoweth not.

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And it is not only he that denyeth God, that is an Atheist, but he that knoweth not that there is a God. And therefore if ignorance cut not off, then Infidelity and Atheism cut not off. And if neither of these cut off, then no particular Heresie can: nor any such Apostasie, as men are capable of, that had but an Infant Church-state: gross ignorance at a capable age, proveth gross ungodlinesse, and Apostasie. For if mens hearts had bin towards God, they would have sought to know him, and if they know him not, their hearts are A-

theisticall, and without him.

3. Wickedness is either such as may consist with habituall adhering to God in Christ; or fuch as shews a separation or renunciation; the one being ungodliness partiall, and quoad actum particularem, (as Peter's deniall) and the other being ungodline se quead statum. He that faith the former cutteth not off from the Church, will scarcely say, that it doth not meritoriously suspend the Offender from the Communion of the Church, till he appear penitent And he that faith the latter cuts not off, from the Church "meritoriously, must fay that nothing doth it. For this is Apostacie, and comprehendeth the greatest Heresie. Such Hereticks hold that the pleasure of sin for a season, is to be chosen before a life of Holiness with the Hopes of Everlasting life: and the flesh to be pleased before the Lord: And I think this is Heresie. But whether these be cut off from the Church or not, either they bring the person under the guilt of excommunication, or else there is no excom-munication to be used. And if they be excommunicated, we shall not much contend with you about their rights. As long as you grant that they have no fuch right as that they may have the use of Church communion, we are fatisfied. And yet I must say, that it is a blind conclusion, that the excommunicate are Church-members, without distinguishing of excommunication. If a man shall openly declare that he believeth not in Jesus Christ that dyed at Ferusalem, nor that there is any life to come; but yet he believeth in a Christ within him, and a Heaven and Hell within men; (as the Ranters, Familists, &c. did) and yet this man, that he may pervert the fouls of others will hold communion with the Church, and declare, that he takes the Scripture in his sense, I doubt not but this man, athough a professed Infidell and Apostate, is yet to be excommunicated, while he pretendeth to Communion; and if this excommuniof cate man be not out of the Catholike Church, then no man is out of it, and you may next question

question whether the Devill be not a Member, that believeth much more then he.

But when I say that Infidelity, Impiety. Heresie, do cut off or cast out, I meane it but Meritoriously. Bither these crimes are private and unknown, or provable. If not provable, then they merit this, and more Coram Deo, but not Ecclesia judice, that is, though there be guilt or demerits, we are no capable judges of it. But if the crime be provable, then it is either such, as needs a judgment or not. If it need a judgement, the person is only dejure cast out before the sentence (which is terminus diminuene and is not actual casting out) and he is actually cast out by the fentence, and the execution : so that his fin cast him out Meritoriously, the Law Obligatorily, the Paffors of the Church Sententially, and the whole Church, Pastors and People, Executively in avoiding him. But if there need no judgement, then he is excommunicate actually ip/o jure, by the Law alone, without a Judge, which may be in many a case: Asif he be a notorious Infidell, Atheist, Blaspheamer, or notoriously beyond all doubt and controversie one of those, that the Law commands us to avoid; we must execute this Law, though there be no sentence pronounced. The want of a mans fentence

ill not excuse us from obeying Gods Laws.
nd where there is no controversie through
ne notoriousness of the case, there needs no

idge.

6. If Birth-priviledge will ferve alone for the Adult to prove their Title to the Churchate and priviledges of the Adult, then no man nat is born of Christian Parents can be oboxious to excommunication, or justly excommunicate: For he is still a Child of Believing arents: and no sin will make them othersife. And therefore if that were enough, he ath a good Title still. Nay it would follow nat he cannot Apostatize; for he cannot fall way from this. But the consequence is about therefore so is the Antecedent.

7. If Infant Title only be sufficient to the dult, then no Parent is necessarily obligged o prosesse himself a Christian, or actuall between, in order to prove the interest of his child to Baptism (nor any that offer him in the Parents stead.) For it is sufficient if the Parents (or susceptors) say, we were Intant-members and Baptized, and therefore our Thild must be so: but whether we are assuall selievers, now, it is not necessary that we tell on But the Consequent is so absurd, that whoever should have offered a Child to Baptism on these terms in the Ancient Church,

(or any Church that I know of, till very late ly) would have bin rejected. The acceptance and Baptism of our Infants, is one of the priviledges of Believers: But no one hath right to this priviledg (that his children be thus accepted into the Church) upon a bare Infant-Title, without the profession of a perfonall actuall Faith. Therefore, &c.

8. If the opposed Doctrine should hold good then all the world hath right to Church-Communion, (or Millions of Infidels, at least) But the consequent is false: therefore so is the Antecedent. The reason of the Consequence is plain; because Noah was a Churchmember, and all the world came out of his Loynes: And the men of Thracia, Bithynia, and most of Asia, where Mahomet is worshipped may say, Our Ancestors were Christians: Therefore the Birth-priviledges fill going down from generation to generation even to the Thousandth generation, it must follow that the present generation of Mahometans and other Infidels, are Church members still : For they lost not their natus rall Relation to their Parents.

9. It will not prove a Society of Adult persons to be a Christian Church, if they have no more but their Insant-Condition: therefore it will not prove a single person to

e a Member of the Church. That which is neeffary to make a fociety, a Christian fociety, is eccessary to make a person, a Christian person, ut I hope none will deny, but that some kind f Profession is necessary to make, or prove company of men, to be a Christian Church: herefore some profession is necessary to make, r prove a man, to be a Church-member.

10. If Infant-conditions will suffice to the Adult for Church-membership, and common riviledges, then will they ferve for Justificaon, and Salvation, that are speciall priviledgs: But the Consequent is falle: therefore so the Antecedent. The reason of the conseuence is, because though the benefits be valous, yet the Covenant and Conditions are he same, by which we have right to one and the other. It is the Appearance of the me Faith, by profession before men, that live Title, Coram ecclesia, whose inward sinerity giveth right Coram Deo, (as was as presaid) And God giveth Title to all the blefngs of the Covenant, Coram Dec on the time conditions. And there is also a parity freason. For if it be enough to prove our ght to Adult Communion (to praise God; and have all his ordinances and helps in the hurch, &c.) that we had Christian Parents. when must it be enough to prove our Title in

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all the rest of our benefits. The ancient Fathers and Churches thought that Baptism did as certainly give the Infant rightly Baptized, a right to pardon of Original sin, and eternall life, as to outward Church-priviledges. And if the same Covenant give both on the same condition, then he that hath the condition of one, hath of both. I have proved in another Disputation, that God hath not two Covenants of grace on his part, one of spiritual or inward mercies, and another of outward Ordinances; and that he giveth not these inward benefits and the outward signes of them, upon various conditions, but on the same

11. Faith or the profession of it in the Adult, is either necessary to Church-communi on, or unnecessary; if unnecessary, then Christians have no more to do in the Church ther Heathens; if necessary, then either as a meet duty, or as a condition, or other means Not as meer duty; for then still the Insidels should be equally received, though not applauded It must be therefore necessary as a meanes. And the very words of the promise tells it what fort of meanes it is, that makes Faith to be its condition.

12. I would know of my adversary, what he would do with the Son of a Believer that were unbaptized at 40. or 50. years of age

would he Baptize him without a profession of actuall Faith of his own, or not? if he would, then he would make new fashioned Christians and Churches; and might Baptize all the posserity of the Apostates, or the ancient Christians in the world, that would consent. Yea, he could not indeed Baptize them; for Baptism essentially contained a profession of consent unto the Covenant, which therefore others make for Insants, that have the dispose of them. But if he would not Baptize such, without profession, then it seems he takes not their Birth-priviledges to be a sufficient condition of their Title there-unto.

13. A Covenant breaker can claim no right to the benefits of the Covenant (suppoling him to violate the main conditions on which the benefits are suspended) But all schole at capable age that have nothing but their Infant condition to shew, are Covenant breakers: therefore they have no right to the benefits of the Covenant They therefore were engaged personally to be leve in God the Father, Son, and Holy Good, when they came to the use of reason; we have cause therefore to fee whether they have broke, or kept this Covenant; and if they have broke glit, they can at present claim no Title to the benefics. Z 14. He

God is, and that he is a Remarder of them that diligently feek him: Therefore those that profess not this belief, cannot come to God, and consequently not have Communion with the Church. Without Faith it is impossible to please God, Heb. 11.5,6. Therefore without a profession of Faith, it is impossible to have right to just Communion; which is purposely for the pleasing of God.

Object. But (us said) Infants have Faith; that is, a Relative Faith, and a Faderall Faith, as well as a Relative Faderall Holiness: Their right is not only in their Parents, but in themselves; and therefore their Faith is in themselves: and this continueth with the aged, till Heresie and Schisme out it

off.

Answ. Call any thing under Heaven by the name of Faith, so you will but explain your meaning, and we will quarrell as little as may be with you about words: But little know we what you mean by Relative or Fæderall Faith, unless it be plainly, to be semen fidelium, the seed of believers: that there is a Relative and Fæderall Holines, is Scripture Dostrine, and good sense: For the formall nature of the thing is a relation which commonly is expressed by the name of Holines, and

and which in that phrase is implyed. But I remember not that Scripture ever speaks of a Relative or Fæderall Faith : For I believe not that it was Infants, that Christ calls the listle ones that believe in him. And Faith being an act or habit, you must mean some other species of Faith, which confisheth in relation, I know it not, nor will I use your Language; though I think it more tolerable to call the Infant Relatively a Believer, then to say he hath Relative Faith; for in so saying, no more is meant, but that he is a Disciple of Christ, or belongs to him as he is the Seed of a Believer in Covenant. But let this word of Faderall Relative Faith be used by you as you please: If the thing fignified by it be any more then I have expressed, you should tell us what you mean : If it be no more but to be the Seed of a Believer, then we doubt not but this continueth when they come to age : but it doth them no good at age, as to the continuing of their Title to Church-membership before God without a Faith of their own, nor before the Church without a profession of it. That the Infant himself is the Subject of his own Right, is a thing that no man, that I know makes doubt of, that believeth him to have any Right : But the active main condition of that right is not to be performed by himself buc

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but by the Parent; and only the Passive Condition is to be found in himself, that he be the Seed of that Parent: If he must be a Believers Seed, its the Parent that must Believe: But that will not serve his turne at age, if he do not also believe himself.

15. It is granted by the Dissenters, that the ignorant for all their Infant Title, have no Immediate right to the Communion of the Church. And we will not contend about names: this satisfieth us in the maine. It is not Actuall right, if it be not immediate plenary right: that which they call a remote right, is properly no actuall right, but a term of Diminution, as to it; when right hath two: Conditions, you may call it right, when the first and greatest is performed : but actually it is none, till all be performed: For it is still but Conditionall, while any part of the Condition is unperformed, faith Learned Mr. Fullwood, page 274. The rule to give all their due, is of indispensable Obligation: but seeing ignerant persons, have no such immediate right in the Supper what injury or wrong is there done them?

Object But ignorance doth not wholly cut a man off from the Church: For such a knowledge goeth not to the essence of te Church for its form is society or Community.

Answ.

Answer. 1. Its sufficient to our present purpole, that it excludeth men meritoriously from immediate right to the Communion of the Adult. 2. Ignorance quatalis materially, is no fin (as in Ideots, Paralyticks, &c.) and ther-

It is totall Ignorance that the Objection extendeth to, or Ignorance of the Christian Faith.

fore cuts not off. But ignorance

in a Subject, where knowledg should be found, is culpable, and complicate alwaies with Infidelity, or not believing; and therefore doth declare the person to be matter uncapable. If you choose to say, it cuts not off, I easily can prove, that it manifesteth that he is not in the Invisible, and ought not to be esteemed of the visible Church, by reason of his incapacity; his former Title ceasing, for want of the condition of its continuation. 3. Knowledge in the capable Adult, is an essentiall to the Church, as a fociety. A Church is a society of Christians; As it is a society, Chriflianity is not effentiall to it, and so not Knowledge: For there are societies of Heathens, and Infidels enow. But as it is a Christian ociety, Knowledge is essentiall to it; and herefore, as it is a Church. It's essentiall to field of wheat, that there be wheat in it : Or o a heape of wheat, that it be of wheat. And et not as a field, or as a keap : for there are

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beaps of dire also. The aggregation of a number of individuals, makes it a Community, and the form of the body aggregated as to the mutuall relation of the parts, makes it a Body politick or society. But the essential qualification of the Individuals, viz Christianity, is essential to that society in specie, as a Christian Church. And Faith in the Adult is essential to Christianity, and Knowledge is essential to Faith, or inseparable from it.

Object. Then one should not take another to be a Church-member, till he is satisfied of bis

Knowledge, which were a stranger thing.

Answ. Not so strange as true : supposing him an Adult Person capable of Knowledg. For he cannot be satisfied of his Faith, without being satisfied of Knowledg : nor of his Christianity without his Faith: For we are yet unacquainted with the Christian Infidels. But then Consider, what must be satisfactory to other men concerning their Brothers knowledg. It must satisfie them, that he is by the Pastours of the Church, who are to judge, approved and annumerated with Believers: and that he professeth himself to be a Believer, which cannot be without knowledge: This must satisfie them, till he nullifie this evidence, by a clean bewraying of his Infidelity.

Object,

Object. But the Scripture Saith not that ignorant persons cannot be Church members, or so much as that they ought meerly for their gnorance to be excommunicate. Answ. Doth not the Scripture exclude visible unbelievers, and take in only visible believers (of the Adult) and make the Church a fociety of Beievers separated from unbelievers? Such ignorance therefore as is effentiall to, or infeparable from Infidelity, is in Scripture made the very brand of them, that are without, excluded from the Church. If our Gospell be hid, it is hid to them that are lost, in whom the God of this world hath blinded the mindes. of them that believe not, lest the light of the glarions Gospell of Christ. &c. 2 Cor. 4. 3, 4. That Preaching which Discipleth men, Mat. 28. 19. Doth give them Knowledg, or else it could not give them Faith. For it openeth. their eyes and turneth them from darkness to light, &c. Act. 26. 18. And surely we are translated out of the power of darknesse into the Kingdome of Christ, Col. 1. 14. Those that in time past were not a people, but now are the people of the living God, are called out of darkneffe into bis marvellous light, I Pet. 29, 10. And what Communion hath light with darknesse, righteousnesse with unrighteousnesse, Christ with Beliall, the Believer with the Infin. 24 dell_

dell, 2 Cor. 6. 14, 15, 16.

Object. If Knowledg as such, were necessary to membership, then none could be a member

Without it : But that's not so.

Answ. I. Knowledg as such is necessary no otherwise, then Faith as such, and all one; you may therefore as well plead thus against the necessity of Faith. 2. And we grant that neither Knowledg, nor Faith, are necessary to uncapable Subjects, that is, in themselves. You know Faith in Infants, (such as we call Faith) is not necessary to their Justification; and yet will you fay, it is not necessary to the Adult? The promise bath made it necessary to the Capable. 3. And we grant that neither Knowledg, nor Faith (justifying or dogmaticall) are necessary to the being of a visible Member, that is meerly fuch: God only seeth the heart. But yet the appearance or profession of Faith, and so of Knowledge, in the effentials of Christianity, is of necesfity.

4. But though a personal Faith, or Knowledg, in truth or in profession, be not necessary to an Infant, either for Membership or Justification, yet their Parents Faith or Prosession is necessary: or esset the promise is to more, then Believers and their Seed, quod restat

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Object. But a Negative consent is Sufficient; to continue such in Govenant as before were admitted in Infancy, or at age: And this Negative confent, is but non-actuall diffent, or a non-renouncing of the Golpell: And therefore, as Positive consent, so althall Faith and Knowledge, are not necessary.

Answ. A dangerous doctrine! A negative consent is no consent. Why then should the ears of men be abused by the name, when there is nothing to answer it? A Negative Faith, in english is Infidelity, or not believing. Is not this a delusory teaching of the Church, to call unbelief by the name of Negative Faith, or Negative Consent? If a block, a bruit, or a Subject otherwife Naturally uncapable, be the Subject; then indeed it is inculpable, and your Negative Consent or Faith, is properly but a Negative dissent, or unbelief. But if a capable

Should a man never thinke of God, Christ or Heaven, and so never have actuall dissent, he were yet an Atheift and Infidell: Much more when he heareth, and therefore must needs think of them: for then it is impossible, the will should neither disfent nor consent.

Faith is a positive being, and therefore must have a positive discovery: perhaps many a Fanizary neverrenounced Christ in words, nor many another Childe of Christians, that is carried away, where they never heard of Christ.

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Postscript.

oblieged person be the Subject (which is our case) then your Negative consent is in english privative not consenting, and privative unbelief, or rejecting Christ. What a meanness is here to convey flat Infidels into the Church, or continue them there, under the Cloake of an abusive name! even by calling a non-disfenting conjunct with their Infidelity, or not consenting to the Covenant of grace, by the name of Negative consent. Were it a person that had entered at age, yet if he have afterward but your Negative consent, (which is neither to consent or dissent) he is an Apostate : And if he refuse consent, when called to it, by his lawfull governours, he gives occasion to be suspected of Apostacie, much more when he continueth to refuse consent, when so much of the life and practise of Christianity consisteth in it, and in the manifestation ofit. But especially when persons were Baptized in Infancy, and never yet professed a Faith or Consent of their own. If that man that had no Faith but his Parents, (and his being a Believers feed, which you call Fæderalt Faith) shall be continued at age a Member of the Church, by a not-actuall diffenting or renouncing Christ, by expresse words, then lets talk no more of a Church, nor abuse poor Heathens and Infidels so much as to question their

their falvation, or fet them below us. But again, I answer you, that not consenting, is diffenting in the inward act; it is undoubted, that he that for one year, or moneth doth not consent, doth certainly diffent. There's no middle state between Believers and Insidels; Consenters, and Resusers. How shall they escape that neglect of so great salvation? Neglecting, and not consenting in a capable invited Subject is certain Insidelity: and therefore in the externall profession, we must judge accordingly. He that will not consess Christ, even in a Christian Church, and a peaceable age, deserves not to be called a Christian: He that is not for him is against him.

Object. But Gods Covenant people under the Law, were not only admitted without their voluntary confent or knowledg, but commanded to renue their Covenant in such a manner, as that they that were absent, and not in place to expresse consent, were included in those that were

present.

Answ. 1. None but Infants were admitted without consent: nor they without the consent of their Parents, naturall or civill, that had the power of disposing of them.

2. Those that were admitted upon others consent, were not continued at age without their own.

3. The Covenant, Deut. 29.

11, 12, 15. Was no mutuall Covenant to the absent or unborn there mentioned: but only a Covenant offered to the Nation, and conditionally made on Gods part as a promise, to them and their posterity, even to many generations: But those unborn generations, were not in Covenant on their parts, as promisers in the stipulation.

Object. Wickedness it self doth not put a man out of the Visible Church. For a man is said to be cut off, but either de jure, or de sacto; Meritoriously, or Effectually: the former is improperly called cutting off, being but the Desert of it: therefore if those baptized in Infancy, prove afterward wicked, they are

not thereby cut off.

Answ. 1. Such persons as we have in question, sose their Right and sitle by a Cessation, for want of that personal Condition, which the Covenant made Necessary to its continuance. So that we need not prove any other cutting ofs. 2. If he be but Meritoriously cut off, it is the Churches duty to do it Sententially and Executively; it being of indispensable obligation, to give to all their due. 3. It's granted that Heresie cuts off: But how doth Heresie cut off any otherwise then Meritoriors sy? If therefore Wiekedness do as much as Heresie, then thus far they

hey are equal. 4. Either Wickedness fignineth some actual crime like Davids or Peers, when the Church knoweth not whether t be joyned with Habitnal Impenitence, or else it signifieth Habitual stated wickedness with impenitency. The first fort requireth out an Exclusion from Attnal Church-Come nunion, (called suspension by some) as it s but Altual sinne, that deserveth it. The econd fort must have an Exclusion from their State and Church-relation, as it is a State of Impenitency, that deserveth it. The first fort of Excommunication, leaveth a man in he Church, quoad Statum & Relationem, but out of it quoad actum & usum: The The second fort leaves him out of it, both in State and Att. Not that the Excomunication puts him out of the Church, as Invisible: For that he did first himself meritoriously, and so efficiently; even by the efficiency of his demerits; as the Law of Christ did it, by its Obligatory efficiency: But when he' hath put himself out of the Church invisible, and plainly declared this to the Church by his impenitent courses, the Church further declareth it by their Sentence, and puts him out of the Church Visible executively, when be had before, put out himself meritoriously. 5. As I said before, the persons wickedness

is either Notorious and out of question. (as if a man be an open perfecutour of godliness. or daily blaspheame God in the open streets. or Congregation, and many lower cases) or else it is Controvertible, needing proof, and not notorious. In the latter case a wicked man is not Actually cast out of the Communion of the Visible Church, or cut off from it. by his demerics, till his fault be proved, and sentence be passed. But in the former case he is Excommunicate ipso jure, which is more then de jure. We call him excommunicate de jure, who ought to be excommucate nicate de facto: but we call him excommuniipso jure, which is attually excommunicated by the Law, without any further sentence of a Judge, the Law it felf sufficing to enable men to the execution: fo the Law of Christ commanding us to avoid and have no company with Drunkards, Adulterers, Hereticks, &c. if any be Notoriously such, past doubt, every man is obliged by this Law to avoid them in their several capacities, after the due admonitions given them, which the Law requireth, whether the Pastours censure them or no: but his censure layeth on them a double obligation.

Object. If wickedness out off aman, excommunication cannot do it, because it is done already.

Answ.

Answ. If wickedness being not Notorious do only cut him off meritoriously and de jure only ne be excommunicate, then Altual excomnunication must do that which was not affect elly done, but ought to be done. But if by he Notoriety of the crime he be cut off ipfo ure, the Sentence yet may do the same thing, by adding a Second Obligation to the first. A Traitour in actual prosecution of the Soveraigne, seeking his life, is condemned info wre, and any Subject may kill him without entence: and yet he may be proclaimed or entenced a Traitour for all that.

Object. It is proved by some Writers, that neb persons as have neither grace indeed nor n shew, may yet have both a real and visible Interest in the Covenant and Church: and the Arguments for this are yet unanswered: thereore persons baptized in Infancy are in the Church and Covenant at age, though they sever by Profession made so much as a shew of race.

Answ. It was never proved by any Wrier, nor ever will be, that ny person at age, and latural capacity ought to e a member of the Thurch of Christ, under he Gospel (no nor un-

I would fully anfwer fuch kind of Writings, but that judicious Readers are awery of fuch contending, & think

it not worth the der the Law neither) with-Readers time, or out a snew of grace, even of Faith, by his Profession of consent to the Holy Covenant. It's the Arguments against them that remaine unanswered: But that all their Arguments, that I remember, are sufficiently answered, I shall take for granted, till I see a Reply. And for them that tell us of the Church-memberthip of the Adult, confidered without Respect to faving Grace, I shall regard them, when they have proved, either that Faith and Repentance are no faving Graces; or that Profession of Faith bath no Respect to Faith; or that men may have Title to Church-membership, without respect to Prosession of Faith; even of their Parents, if they are Infants; or their own if at age. All these three points are yet unproved.

If any think the learned Mr. Fullwood to be of another mind, let them judg by his own words: Of the Visible Church, cap. 28,pag. 180. Saith he; However I humbly conceive, though more then a bare historical faith should be requisite, yet less then a Faith that fuffisher (I do not say less than the Profession thereof) may truly entitle to Visible Church member ship &c. mark the Parenthesis. And in his Epist, Pripos. 3, & 4. From the Primi

fesit seems at least probable to me, that the Church us to have some kind of respect unto the Saving condition of the person Shee is about to admit into Communion, &c. 4. Yet I humbly conceive that more then a bare entward Profession is requisite, to give real Interest in the Visible Church, and the Priviledges thereof, before God: Though no more is requisite to give visible Interest before men, &c. And for Immediate right to the Communion of the Church in the Lords Supper, he saith, pag. 270. Where there is want of Knowledg (whether naturally or morally) there, we are sure, the Condition of Right is manting; and consequently admission is to be denied, when all is done. And for the maine designe of this Book, he saith, Append. pag. 1, 2. (mentioning Mr. Hanmer's Book) Some happily may be willing to surmise that our two Propositions are irreconcileable, and interpret me an enemy to that most ancient, usefull, and desireable Ordinance. Wherefore, if I may possibly prevent so scandalous a censure. I shall not venture to hold my Reader in fo long Suspence, till he come to the pages, where Confirmation is considered in the Book; nor get barely to acknowledg my allowance of it under my hand; but after my humble thanks heartily tendered to our worthy Author, for his excellent

excellent paines, in so seasonable a Subject, I do also presume earnestly to beseech my Reverend Brotheren, that what Mr. Baxter bath so smartly pressed upon the Ministry about it, may be speedily and seriously considered, and undertaken by us. And many pages after he addes 7. Yea, though after all due paines and endeavoures used we should not be able to reconcile our principles in every point, yet if we can meet in the same practice about Confirmation, though on some small differing grounds, wby may not the Church be happily edified, and the peace thereof in a measure obtained, by such an Unity, Uniformity in practice, while the persons differing but in lighter matters, may waite upon the Lord in this good service, for the great blessing of Unanimity, promised allo? .

Object: But he addeth the proviso, that Confirmation be not thought to have any ingrediency into the nature or being of our membership: and that the temper of the people be found

such, as will admit of such a change.

Answ. We shall casily grant, that Confirmation, as it is a solemn Reception of the person by Imposition of hands, or without Imposition in a purposed solemnity, commonly known by that name, is not of necessity to the Being of our membership: and

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that all those that are received upon profession of Faith may be Church-members; and that the ordinary use of Christian Assemblies, and exercises of worthip, is a Profession, though obscure; and that a baptized person that never was called to a Verball Profession, may be taken for a Christian, or Churchmember, upon such a Practical sort of Profession, joyned with a not-denying of Christ in word or life. But yet we are far from thinking that the Infant-Title-condition of such a one, serveth to prove his present Church-state and Title, now he is at capable ige. The Infant-Title ceaseth, if he coninue it not by a Personal Profession at age. And as there is no middle betweene Believers ind unbelievers, fo there is no fuch thing in capable subject, as non-dissenting, in a noral sense, but true Consenting. It is not possible for the Soul to be neuter, when the hing is offered to our consent, but we must ither will or nill, confent or diffent; though fit were, yet not willing, or not confente ng, is Infidelity and Rebellion in fuch a Subect. And accordingly we maintaine, and unust maintaine, that Profession of some fort er ber is a necessary Condition of the Title, and Church state of the capable Adult, and of light to the Priviledges: And as an obscure

kind of Profession may serve (when a man is called to no more) to prove his Right, so a clearer fort of Profession is necessary to the clearer proof, and ad bene effe Ecclesia. And I have shewed what great and weighty Reafons we have, to require an open, cleare, intelligible Profession: And he that is justly called to for such, giveth cause to the Church to question him of Apostacy, if he refuse without cause. So that of the three Conditions in question, the first (which is our Infantcondition) is utterly insufficient to the capable Adult: and the second (which is an obscure signification of our mind, by our Chris stian practises) may serve ad ese, at least when no more is required: and the third (which is an open approved Profession by word or subscription) is necessary ordinarily ad bene elle.

Thus farre we are agred: But what if we were not? Must we therefore resulte to agree in the practice of the aforesaid Confirmation? Will any good and peaceable man result to joyne with those that think it necessary to Adust Church membership? If this opinion (of the said Non-necessary) had been an Arricle of Faith, and among the necessary Credenda of the Church, we should have had it in some Creed, or heard more of the necessary

cessity of it then we have done, from the Ancient Churches. If we meet about the agenda in our practice, let men take head how they divide from such as differ in the Reasons of their Practice, till they can prove that they deny some Article of the Faith, which is of necessity to be believed.

And as for the peoples unfitness, or any disturbance that will follow thereupon: 1. If there be such a thing, it will be much long of the Ministers: Let them unanimously agree, and they may do well enough with the people, or much the better. But when Ministers themselves are the bellows of faction, and think they can never sufficiently vilifie dislenters, and so have themselves taught the people to take such a Practice for a Prelaticall foppery, or formality, or for an Independent rigidity and extreamity, no wonder, if when they come to practice their duty, they meet with fuch reproaches from the people, as they have taught them. 2. But suppose that people would disturb us, that may in some cases excuse us, as to the mode of Confirmation, or Prosession: but no unfitness of the people can excuse us, as to the substance of the luty; the requiring and approving their Profession. We are false to our trust, and the Church of God, if to avoid disturbance,

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we will confound Believers and Infidels, and destroy the nature of the Church and Ordinances, under pretence of the peoples good.

Object. But it would be your only sure and happy course to exercise Discipline upon all that are baptized in their Infancy; whether at age they consent or no: And finding them in

the Church, you must do so.

Answ. I have said enough to this before. Have they that talk thus, tried this course, or have they not? If they have not, we will beare with them as well meaning men, that talk of what they never tryed; as we would do with a confident man, that would condemn the actions of Souldiours and Seamen, that himself was never in at warres, nor at Sea. But if they have tryed it, what kind of Di-scipline do they exercise? Would they make us believe, that they are able in a Parish of 4000, or 5000, or 6000 Souls, to exercise the Discipline mentioned in Scripture, and the Canons of the Ancient Churches, and that upon such persons, as our Parishes commonly confift of ? I know they cannot do it: I have had tryall to tell me what a man can do. With the help of divers Ministers, and many hundred godly people, to watch over others, and promote this work, I am not

not able to do it on all this Parish, if I might. There is so many offendours weekely to be dealt with, and so much time required to heare witnesses, and admonish them, that it's more then I could possibly do. How Bishops deale with Diocesses, let them see themselves. And if we could do it, yet the people will not consent. If you fend for them, they will not come neer you: If you admonish them in the Congregation by name, they will have an Action at Law against you, if they can? How ever, you will have such a multitude enraged by the exercise of Discipline, if it be faithfully (though never fo tenderly done) that the Church will be in a flame, and your Ministry hated, and the people undone, as I have before declared. So that it is but a name of Discipline, to the de-Aruction of discipline, that this Objection pleadeth for; or else it dishonoureth it self and the Authors.

And as they do by Discipline, so they do by Christian Charity, which is a greater thing. Of old, the Visible members of the Church were the Objects of brotherly Christian Love: And so as they seemed to them to be Believers and penitent persons, the living members did love all the body with that special Love, that was the matter of

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the new Commandment, and proved them to be Christ's Disciples. No man know the hearts of others, and therefore knew not whom to Love as Christians infallibly discerned. But the Profession of Saving Faith and Holiness, being then (and ever) the test of Adult-members, they took all the members of the Visible Church as credibly of the invisible; though with different degrees of Credibility. And accordingly they loved them all, with a Christian special Love, of the same species, though with different degrees of that Love. Whereas this Popish new found trick, of making a new common fort of Faith, and Visible membership, that hath no respect to saving Faith, doth teach all Christians, to Love the members of the Visible Church, but with a common love: and relieve and help them, but with a common Charity. And so the device is to confine our special Brotherly Love and Charity, to a corner of the Visible Church; to a few, whom we will please to think to be godly.

I have oft marvelled in observing some Learned Divines, that bend that way, that they think compassion, and Christian Charity is on their side. What Charity can their Doctrine glory of? They will be so mercifull to Infidels, that are uncapable of a Church-state, as to plead them into the Church; and when they are there, they leave them under the curse, and in a state of damnation in their own judgments; teaching us to judge uncharitably, of the Vifible Church in general for their sakes; and to look on them as without respect to any saving grace, and so without any special Love. A cold comfort ! to bring them into no more capacity of Gods Mercy, nor of our Charity; but into much more capacity of aggravated damnation: which they might better have prevented by being kept in their proper station, till they were capable of more. I confels (though my belief of mens Profession, have different degrees, as I see in them different degrees of Credibility) yet I have Charitabler thoughts of the members of the Visible Church, then these that make so low and miscrable a description of them. And though I know that there are abundance among them, that are Hypocrites, and unfanctified, yet know I none but Saints and Hypocrites, that are tolerable in the Church; nor will I accuse particular persons of Hypocrisie, till I have cause. Neither in my secret, or open censures, will I pluck up the tares upon any fuch terms, as will not fland with

with the fafety of the wheate, but rather let them grow together in my esteeme in the Church, till the time of harvest. And that I may think charitably of the Church, and walk charitably in, and towards it, therefore I would not have it consist of such notorious, ungodly, or heretical men, as are uncapable objects of Christian, Brotherly Love. For Heresie, the foresaid learned Brother tells us, that it cuts men off from the Church. I say so to (meritoriously at least) if by Heresie be meant the exclusion of any essential Article of the Christian Faith: But pag. 199, where he faith, the Controversia may be easily ended, by parting stakes: viz. that some Heresse, which absolutely denyeth some particular fundamental truth, and taketh up some one, or few stones thereof, is consistent with Church-interest : and other Herefie, Which raiseth up the very foundation of Religion , denying most , or the most chief , if not all of the Articles of our Christian Faith, is invery confidently say, that this answer will not serve the turne. If by Fundamentals, be meant (as commonly) the Essential Articles of Christian Fa th, then the absolute denying of any one Article, doth prove that person to be no Christian, nor capable

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of a Church state: For the form is wanting, where any Essential part is wanting. But if any thing else be meant by Fundamentals, no man can decide the Controvesie by it, till it be known what it is: And it will be hard to fastenit on any thing, where the ab. folute denyal of many points shall unchurch, and the absolute denial of one or two points of the same rank and kind not do it. Saith he p. 198. The fews held that an heretical Isralite, bad no communion with the Church of Israel: and why? but because Communion Supposerb union; and union with Israel, or the true Church, is lost with Faith: They also held, (as Selden noteth) that an Israelite turning an Heretike i. E. denying any of the thirteene fundamental Articles, to be as an Heathen man. And a few lines before, he faith, that bifferical Faith, which hath the Doctrine of Faith for its Object, none do doubt to be an Essential, requisite to a true Church-member. Yet that with me is a Vifible member, that hath not this much, which is said to be Essential, no man doubting of it. If they Profess true Faith, though they are flark Atheists at the heart, and have not so much as historical Faith, I shall believe them, till they nullifie their own Profession: But if they profess not also to con-

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sent to have Christ to be their Saviour, I shall not take it for a Profession

of Christianity.

Certain I am, that the ancient Do-Cours with one consent, did look on the baptized generally as pardoned, juflissed, and adopted; and therefore thought that Visible Church-membership, did imply a credibility (at least) of a state of saving grace. Saith Cyprian, Epist. 76. Magn. In Baptismo unicuique peccata sua remittuntur. And upon this supposition run the Arguments of the councell of Carthage, and Firmilian, Epist ibid.

Saith Augustine, De Catechizandis rudibus, cap. 26. His distis interrogandus est, an hac credat, at que observare desideret? Quod cum responderit, solemniter utique signandus est, es ecclessa more trastandus. Obedience it self was promised, and a consent to it prosessed before Baptism then, and ever since Christian Baptism was known.

Idem Epistol. 119. Ad fanuar. cap. 2.
Secundum hanc fidem & spem & dileEtionem, quâ capimus esse sub gratia,
jam commortui sumus cum Christo, &
consepulti per baptismum in morte, &c. Baptism

tism then supposeth credibly Faith, Hope and Love.

Idem Epist. 23. Having shewed why Parents Faith profiteth Infants, and yet their after-sins hure them not, saith Cum autem home sapere caperit, non illud Sacramentum repetit, sed intelligit : ejusque veritati consonà etiam voluntate coaptabitur. Hoc quamdiu non potest (N. B.) valebit Sacramentum ad ejus tutelam adversus contrarias potestates : & tantum valebit, utst ante rationis usum ex hac vita emigraverit, per ipsum Sacramentum Ecclesia charitate ab illa condemnatione, que per unum hominem intravit in mundum, Christiano adjutorio liberetur. Hoc qui non credit, & sieri non posse arbitratur, profecto infidelis est, etsi habeat sidei Sacramentum, longeque melior est ille parvulus, qui etiams sidem nondum habeat in cogitatione, non ei tamen obicim contraria cogitationis opponit, unde Sacramentum ejus salubriter percipit.

And faith the Synod of Dort. Artic.

1. 8. 17. Quandoquidem de voluntate
Dei ex verbo ipsius nobis ist judicandum, quod testatur libitos sidelium, esse
sanctos, non quidem natura, sed beneficio

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faderie gratuiti, in quo illi cum parentibus comprehenduntur, pij parentes de electione & salute sucrum liberorum, quos Deus in Infantia ex hac vita evocat, dubitare non debent. And if there be such certainty of the Election and Salvation of all such Infants of the godly, as ought to exclude all doubting, surely the visible Church-state of the Adult also, hath some respect to saving grace, so farre as that its credible side bumana that such have saving Faith.

And faith Mr Fullwood, Append. p. 6. I conceive that such an ones personall profession in his generall owning the true Faith, and usuall attending Gods publick worship, doth superadde a kinde of new right, and mingle it with such a persons former right, had by his Birth priviledge. And if the [new Right] be not a necessary Right, I think it will prove no right.

I will contend with no man whether the approved profession which I have pleaded for in this book, be the very same thing with the Ancients confirmation. I have given you my thoughts of it, and I am sure the thing in

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question is our duty, and the name not unsit, and that its the same with the Confirmation owned by the Divines of the reformed Churches, and particularly with that established and recommended in the Book of Common-Prayer, here in England, for the substance.

I shall conclude with this serious request to my Brethren, seconded with weighty reasons. Even that they would take heed of both extreams in their judging of Church-members, and managing the Difcipline and Ordinances of Christ. 1. Should we be so loose as to cast out Discipline. or fettle the Churches either with fuch materials for quality, or quantity, as that it shall be uncapable of Discipline. we shall never be able to answer it to Christ. And should we make a new qualification of Adult Church-members . even their Infant-Title-condition alone, or the profession of a Faith that is not faving, we should come too neere the making of a new Baptism, and Church. And truly if we do but flubber over the business, and to avoid offence or trous I am sensible ble to our selves, should also how the take up with a profession utterly

arguments for utserly incredible, especially both extreams in these times when we have do either drive fo much liberty and counor draw the Reader to the tenance from the Magistrate. Anabaptists. for a fuller Reformation we shall be guilty of fo much

injury to the Church, and the Chriflian name, and our people fouls ; as is little confidered by many that have their eye only on the contrary extreame, as if there were no danger but on one fide.

2. On the other fide, if we go fo rigidly and unrighteoufly to work, as fome men are bent to do, we may accomplish those ends, that we are endeavouring to overthrow, and frustrate our own, which we think to attain. If we will reject the Scripture-ancient-Character or Evidence of Title to Church. priviledges, even a credible profession of Christianity, we shall confound our felves, and trouble the Church, and be at a losse for a certain Evidence, and never know what ground to rest up on. And we shall injure the souls o multitudes of true Believers, and keep out those, that Christ will entertain For there are no other terms, beside taking

taking mens profession by a humane Faith, on which we can admit perfons, without excluding multitudes, that should not be excluded. I doubt many Ministers, that have had a more ingenuous education themselves, are not sufficiently sensible of the great disadvantage, that Countrey People are under, by their want of such Education, Many that are bred where holy discourse s Arange, and never were used to iny thing of that nature, no nor o common Urbanity of speech, or belaviour, may be brought to hearty orrow for finne, and defires after Christ and Grace, long before they can xpresse their knowledg, or desires, in any ach manner, as some men do expect. Many racious souls (as farre as I can discerne) I ave met with, that never were noted for by thing extraordinary in Religion, ther let in many, that are unregene-tte, into the Church, then keep out ne that's a true Believer, if there be other remedy. The Lord Jesus that ed for them, and fent the Ministery for em, and will at last admit them into ВЬ

Heaven, will give us little thanks, for a cluding his weakest Members from the Church, and from the use of the crament and Communion of Saints, w have most need of them, of any th have right to them. For my part, desire not, nor dare be guilty of the way of Government in the Church as shall grieve those that Christ wor not have grieved, and exclude the wea and turne or keep out the Infants Grace, from the Family of the Lo A compassionate Minister is likest Christ, that will not break the bruil reed. How dealt he with the wom taken in adultery? How tenderly excuse he the fluggishnesse of his Disciples, the could not watch and pray with him houre, in his last extreamity, with Spirit is willing, but the flesh is weat when many now that think well of themsel would almost excommunicate men as small a fault; We know not in s cases, what Spirit we are of.

But this is not all: I must conf Brethen (which I beseech you patiento hear) these three things very mustick upon my thoughts. I. I can

t observe; how many eminent Profess of Piery have miscarried, and grieufly miscarried of late, when some lower Professions have stood fast. nd I think God suffers the falls of many his own, to let them know the ilty of our natures, and cause them be compassionate to others. And he censorious mens hearts might smite m, if they had heard from their Ma. , Let him that is faultless, cast the first

2. And it slicks very much upon my most experienced of my tlock are tender of the scanmost experienced us themselves, and ald not have me to them out while appeareth any ent hope: rememthe condition once they were meives in, and their les after convicti-Mand what had beof them if then had been cast out.

nghts, how small a handfull the censorious would reduce the Catholike Church of Christ to. When it is but about the fixth part of the world that are at all Baptized Christians: and scarce the fixth part of them, that are Protestants; and of the Protestants, so few, except in England, that are so qualified for holinels, as in your admissions you exspect: and in England how small is the number

that you would admit, I am deeply afrelest you hainoully injure the Cause. Christ, by your excessive rigor: a lest confining even the visible Church is so exceeding small a compass, sho tempt men to insidelity. For he to day can believe, that Christ died for one of a hundred thousand in world, may to morrow believe, that died for none at all. I hope the listock of the Elect, is not so little, some would have the visible Church of called.

3. We are deeply sensible of the crease of Insidels here in England. The are too thick about us, under since the mask Seekers; and are perswading people gainst the Christian Faith, and true Scripture, and the life to come and the life to come about the dotter and the since the seems and if any of you should sin with good men, that are of this christian over rigorous way, consider farre they may make use of such accomplish their designs. If by they can get almost all the

n-Churched in estimation; and fifty for ne, if not an hundred for one in ingland, actually un-Christened, and neir children after them left unbaptized: hat will follow? I doubt this, if God hould not fave us from your miscarriges, When there is but one of an undred in all the Land, that is a Christian, he rest will want neither malice, nor pow-, to put an end here to the Christian ame; or at least to the liberty and lory of Christianity. They may choose ur Parliaments for us, and in a word, with us what they lift, when they re exasperated to the greatest hatred of ; and cut off our liberties, and fet up fidelity or Heathenism by a Law. I trust dod will never suffer this : But let us take ed of gratifying Infidels, and calting all ir safety upon miracles, lest we be found be but foolish builders, and tempters f God : still you may find that overoing is the most effectuall undoing. nd if you would find out the most r them among those, that seem over alous against the enemies of the Gospell, I feem to over-doz in the work of B b 3 the

the Gospell, I desire to bring no party of godly men into suspicion, or odium by this: but indeed I desire to countermine the Apostates; and it would be the most amazing confounding thing, that could befall us in this world, if we should see the Church of God betraied into the hands of Infidels, and the Gospell loft, by the indifcreet and inconfiderate over-doing of those well-meaning men, that did the work of Infidels, and ungodly men for them, while they thought that none were so much against them. If the neck of Religion be broken among us, I am a fraid the imprudent will be some cause that would lead us above the top of the Ladder.

Sure I am between you both, you have the easiest way to the sless, that ruinto extreams. Durst I cast off Discipline and only preach, and please all the parision Sacraments and other Ordinances how easie a life should I have to the sless of And if I durst take out one to a hundred, that are eminent in Piety that will scarce ever call me to an penall acts of Discipline, I should have a much more easie life then the former

ut they are both so case, that I the nore suspect them, to be the fruit of he wisdome of the flesh Indeed, both ne extreames do cast off Discipline, for ne most part, whatever they pretend. One fort never meane to exercise it: ad the other fort extoll it; and when ney have done, they separate a few f the best that are like to have no ed of the troublesome part of it, and fit down without the exercise of it; retending to be Physicians, but refusing receive the sick into their Hospils Brethren, I speake not as an cuser, but a Monitour, and shall ntinue to pray for the Churches Puy and Peace, while I am

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July, 30.

Dr H. Hammond, In his view of the Direct. §. 41. p. 45, 46. For Confirmation, which being so long and s scandalously neglected in this Kingdom (though the Rule have also been severe, and carefull in requiring it, will now not so easily be digested, having those vulgar prejudices agains it; yet must I most solemny profess my opinion of it; That it is most ancient Christian Custome tending very much to Edification which I shall make good by givin you this view of the manner of it. 1 is this; that every Rector of any Pa rish, or Curate of charge, should b a Familiar way of Chatechizing instruct the Youth of both Sexe within his Cure, in the Principle of Religion, so farre that every one them before the usuall time of comin to the Lords-Supper, should be ab to understand the particulars of the vow, made in Baptism, for the Credence

and Facienda; yea and Fugienda also: what must be Believed, what done, and what forsaken; and be able to give an intelligent account of every one of these: which being done, every such Childe so prepared, ought to be brought to the BP for Confirmation. Wherein the intent is, that every such Child, attain'd to years of Understanding, shall singly and solemnly before God, the BP, and the whole Congregation, mith his omn consent, take upon himself the obligation to that, which his God-Fathers and God-Mothers in Bapti m. promised in his Name; and before all those Reverend Witnesses, make a Firm, Publick, Renned promise, that by Gods help he will Faithfully endeavour, to discharge that Obligation in every point of it, and persevere in it all the dayes of his life. Which resolution and promise so heightned with all those solemnities, will in any reason have a migh-

ty impression on the Child, and an influence on his actions for ever after. And this being thus performed by him, the BP shall severally impose his hands on every such Child (a ceremony used to this purpose by Christ himself) and bless and pray for him, that now, that the Temptations of sinne begin more strongly in respect of his age, to assault him, he may receive Grace and Strength against all such Temptations or Assaults, by way of prevention and speciall assistance; without which, obtained by Prayer from God, he will never be able to do it. This is the Sum of Confirmation; and were it rightly observed (and no man admitted to the Lords-Table, that had not thus taken the Baptisme-Bond from the Sureties into his own Name; and no man after that, suffered to continue in the Church, which brake it wilfully; but turned out of those Sacred Courts by the

power of the keys in Excommunication) It would certainly prove by the Blefsing of God, were it begun, a most effectuall meanes to keep men (at least within some terms of Christian civility, (from fallings into open Enormious sinnes; and that the defaming and casting out of this so blamelesse gainfull order, would be necessary or usefull to any policy, save only to defend the Devill from so great a blow, and to sustaine and uphold his Kingdome, I never had yet any Temptation or Motive to suspect or imagine. Instead of considering any Objections of the adversary against this piece, whether of Apostolicall or Ecclesiafticall Discipline (which I never heard with any colour produced) I shall rather express my most passionate wish unto my friends, those who sincerely wish the good of this Nationall Church, that they will endeavour their uttermost to revive the e these meanes of regaining of purity and exemplary lives of all its members, when God by referring our peace shall open a doore for it.

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SA Henry Newmam



